

THE VOICE OF TRUTH

PUBLISHED BY THE SANATHAN DHARMA SABHA, LADYSMITH, NATAL







*His life was gentle: and the elements
So mixed in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world: "This was a Man".
—Shakespeare*

Raman T. Riga

THE VOICE OF TRUTH

CENTENARY PUBLICATION 1869—1969

Issued by
THE SANATHAN DHARMA SABHA
LADYSMITH, NATAL

on the occasion of the unveiling of
the Mahatma Gandhi Statue

6th SEPTEMBER, 1970

By SHRI C. C. DESAI

(C.I.E., I.C.S., Retd.)

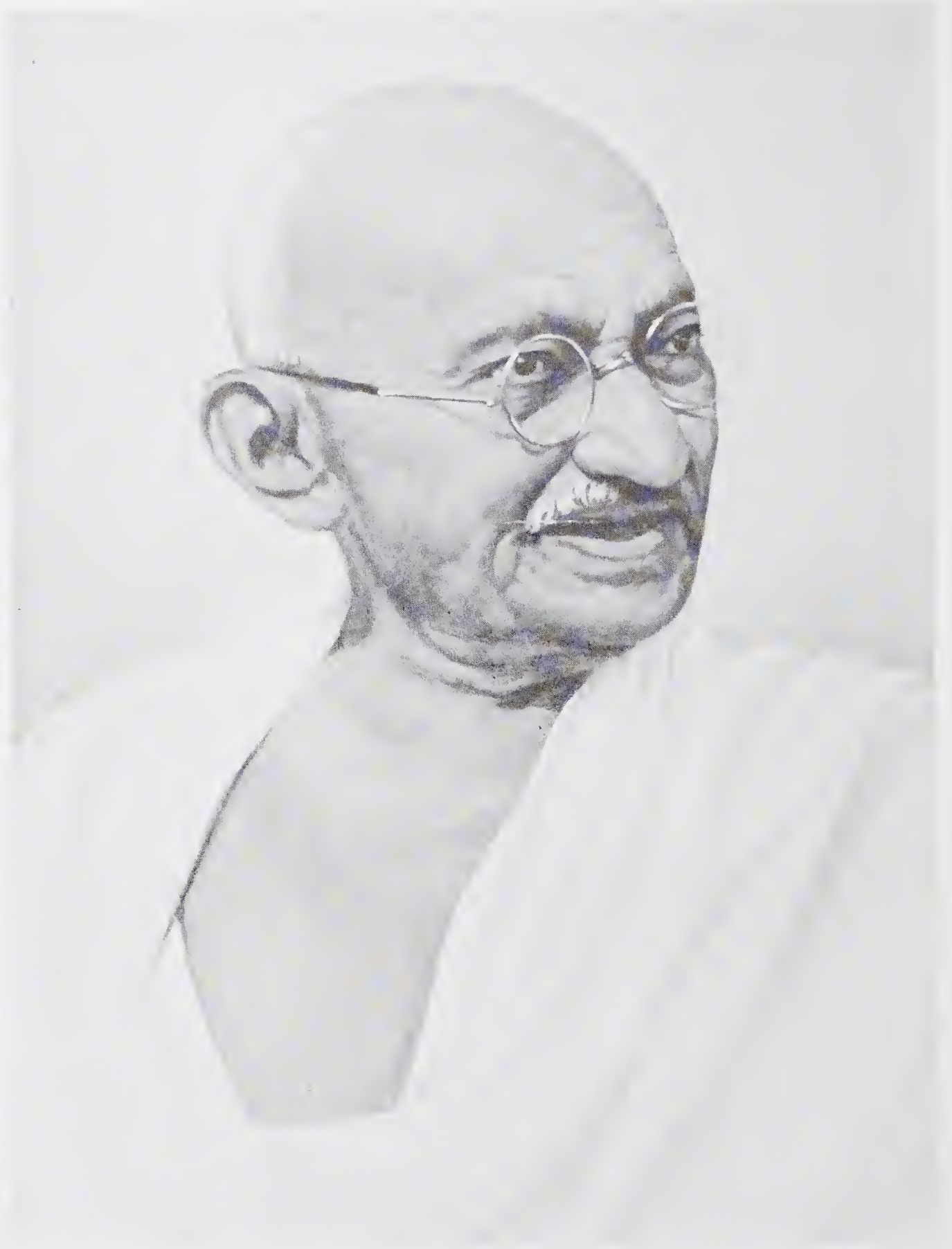
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Mahatma Gandhi Statue and Bursary Fund

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*"Where he sat is a temple . . .
Where he walked is hallowed ground."*

Preface

by Mr. Raman J. Riga

President, Sanathan Dharma Sabha

The highest law of love is SERVICE' Perhaps no man in recorded history has given so much love and dedication towards duty as did Mahatmaji. Gandhiji believed in goodness and he derived his greatness, his towering stature from the immaculate goodness of the spirit which admitted nothing narrow, mean or selfish in its scheme of things.

In 1969, a hundred years after Gandhiji's birth, his teachings received international recognition. For centuries to come his teachings will be re-interpreted and re-stated because like Abraham Lincoln's life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness and progress will depend to a great extent on TRUTH, INDUSTRY, and NON-VIOLENCE.

The relationship between God and Man is the greatest drama in the world – a drama in which we are actors – and the outcome of it is of vital personal importance, for in the final analysis we do not break the cardinal principles of Love – Service – and Truth. They destroy us, if we disregard them.

What we hope for, that this simple and brief volume will present its readers with a glimpse of the long and historical association of Gandhiji with South Africa, and particularly that of Ladysmith. A few illustrations are included in this volume, in order to give the reader a vivid idea of the place where Gandhiji's saintly 9 feet statue stands. It is a memorial to his historical association with the town and temple. Gandhiji rendered humanitarian service with the Indian Ambulance Corps during the Anglo-Boer War.

The Sanathan Dharma Sabha has now completed its eleven years of consistent work. Indeed, it is our greatest achievement in the realisation of our dreams – The building of the Temple – The erection of the Statue and the creation of the Bursary Trust.

The culmination of all our endeavours is the unveiling of the Statue of Mahatma Gandhi on the 6th September 1970 by Shri Chandulal Chunilal Desai, a distinguished member of the Parliament of India, New Delhi. His experience in the international field has contributed in a large measure to the decision he made to travel to South Africa. We thank him most sincerely for undertaking to perform this noble task.

"The Voice of Truth" is published to synchronise with the world wide celebrations of the centenary of the birth of Mahatmaji. To Swami Venkatesananda of the Divine Life Society, we are greatly indebted for the writing of the biography of Gandhiji. Swamiji has beautifully eulogised the spiritual life of the Mahatma. The Sabha is deeply grateful to him for placing his vast knowledge and experience at our disposal.

This volume would be incomplete if mention is not made of our esteemed trustee, Shri Amritlall Haribhai, who has epitomized the Gandhian spirit. He has laboured and carried out the duties assigned to him with dedication and love. We take this opportunity to record our Thanks for his unselfish and invaluable service.

May this volume serve as an introduction to the Lord Vishnu Temple – The Statue and the memories that it evokes of Gandhiji and his great service to all mankind.

Message from
His Worship the Mayor of Ladysmith
(Councillor H. E. Ries)



I have pleasure in complying with the request of the Sanathan Dharma Sabha to write this message for their brochure commemorating the unveiling of the Mahatma Gandhi Statue. I congratulate the Sanathan Dharma Sabha on having finalised the arrangements for the unveiling of the statue.

Mahatma Gandhi lived in Ladysmith for some period and it is therefore fitting that the Hindu community has erected a monument in honour of a man who in his later years rose to such great heights. His mission was to try and break down social inequality in his own country. It is commendable that he accomplished this by peaceful rather than violent means. In these times when intolerance and violence have taken such proportions, I trust that the example set by Mahatma Gandhi will inspire people to be more tolerant towards each other.

In conclusion, I wish to welcome, to our town, all those who have travelled great distances to participate in the unveiling ceremony.



A Message from

Dr. M. B. Naidoo

(B. Sc. Hon.; Litt. D.; F.R.G.S.)

Trustee, Mahatma Gandhi Settlement, Phoenix
Retired Principal of Sastri College

History is not without its liberators of mankind nor are the chapters of recent events without reference to men like Albert Schweitzer and Mahatma Gandhi, both contemporaries in the great mission to alleviate the sufferings of mankind. The former dedicated his life to counteract the scourges that plagued the lives of the inhabitants of the Gabon in French Equatorial Africa and the latter sought to remove the stigma of caste and the social indignities of the millions in India. Both these men were motivated by altruism of the highest order and both sought with irrepressible compassion to respond to the appeals of despairing humanity.

In a much wider field and with much greater success as politician and ascetic, Gandhiji reshaped the social structure of conservative India. His greatest contribution lay not so much in the political emancipation of his country as in the near collapse of a social system which plagued India for unrecorded centuries. With remarkable steadfastness, indomitable courage and severe austerity the Mahatma upheld the principles of Truth and Non-violence as weapons of righteousness against an intractable government and a confused populace. That he became a national hero and one of the world's greatest personalities is not because of the adoration of the masses in India but because of the exalted personal qualities of leadership, the moral uprightness and the passionate adherence to Truth which the world acclaimed were the qualities in him that befitted him to rank among the immortals. To such a man the Sanathan Dharma Sabha of Ladysmith pays its homage. The Sabha has erected for the Mahatma a memorial which will remain imperishable and unsullied by the depredations of time but which will be a reminder to posterity of the greatness of a man who upheld Truth that it may remain inviolable.

For the great task that the Sabha has accomplished with unerring planning and perfect unanimity in matters of decision, I offer my very warm congratulations and good wishes for their continued leadership in the affairs of the people.



A Message from

Mr. A. M. Moolla

Prominent Industrialist and Philanthropist

I am very happy indeed to contribute this message on the commemoration of the Centenary of the Birth of Mahatma Gandhi. Beloved of mankind everywhere, his name will be remembered and honoured at this time by millions of people throughout the whole world, for his living example and his teachings.

Mahatma Gandhi is perhaps the only man in the present century who offered the world in his own life a greater power than lies in the use of guns and armament. He discovered and lived by a spiritual inspiration, a belief in the beauty and strength of universal love and brotherhood. It is good to know that it was here in South Africa where his early discoveries in Truth were made. Here he began to project his ideals into the practical affairs of daily life. His story is known by all who love and care for their fellow men.

Had the world followed with greater zeal in his footsteps in these days of tragedy and conflict, much good would have come. For whereas he taught love and brotherhood, the modern world could not rid itself from violent power and conquest. His conquest was the triumph of non-violence over powerful violent force. I remember being told of the first letter he sent to a newspaper here. On his arrival in Durban he thought he would visit Durban's Courthouse to learn something of court procedure before going to Pretoria where he was engaged in a very complicated legal case. He took a seat at the Horseshoe reserved for lawyers, wearing his turban. The Magistrate looked at him with disapproval. Why was an Indian labourer sitting in Court where lawyers sat?

He was ordered out of Court. The incident caused quite a stir. The newspapers reported it. And Gandhi was very distressed. He wrote a pleading apology to the Natal Mercury explaining that in India to wear one's turban was to pay respect to one's host. He was anxious not to offend the Magistrate, and he hoped the Magistrate would forgive him. Always Gandhi sought to be forgiven for any hurtful action to others of which he might even not be guilty.

A year later, at a time when there was a lot of anti-Indian agitation in Durban a daily paper published a leading article, saying very unkind things about Indians. The leading article was headed "RAMSAMY". Reading this hurt Gandhi very much indeed and he wrote a reply couched in the kind of language which today all the world knows the language of human brotherhood. But the last sentence of it has always remained as a message for all of us. "Will you not," he wrote, "Re-read your New Testament?" The plea in his letter was a plea to the Editor to remember that under God all men are brothers.

It is a lesson that he taught all his days. As I remember it, I like to think it was meant for you and for me: to remember what our respective religions have taught us of the Almighty and about each other that we should live in harmony and peace with one another. This was the inspiration that led him to sacrifice himself not merely for his fellow countrymen but as an example to the whole world.

On this commemoration day, we should all be grateful and voice our thanks that such a man lived among us. It is in this spirit that I add my best hopes and good wishes for this commemoration year of the great Gandhi. In doing so, I end my message with a quotation.

When his time came to depart from this world, his remains were placed on a boat that slid out on to the waters of the Holy River. As it was carried down the stream, tens of thousands of people sang the funeral chant of their beloved leader.

Here is what they chanted:—

*"Holy Soul, may sun, air, and fire be auspicious unto thee,
May the waters of all rivers and oceans be helpful unto thee,
And serve thee ever.*

May all space and its four quarters be open unto thee for thy God!"

I like to think when all of us come to the end of our days the same lovely words may accompany our soul into the Great Hereafter.



A Message from

Admiral of the Fleet

The Earl Mountbatten of Burma

I am delighted to hear that Mr. Chandulal Desai will be performing the official unveiling ceremony of the Mahatma Gandhi Statue in Ladysmith on 6th September.

In my message for the Mahatma Gandhi Centenary Supplement to the Ladysmith Gazette in September last year I told you of what we in the UK Gandhi Centenary Committee were doing to celebrate the great occasion.

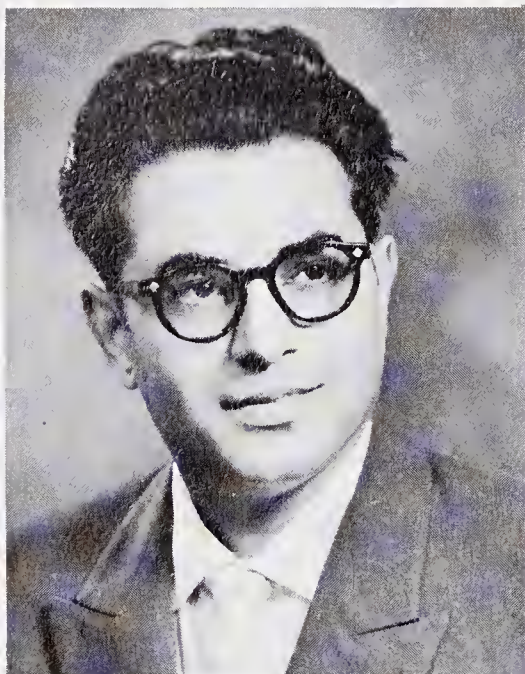
The response to our efforts was tremendous and it is impossible to measure the extra goodwill towards India which has been generated in Great Britain as a result of the celebrations held.

The UK Committee for the Gandhi Centenary included men and women from all walks of life, politics, art, literature and the sciences. All found a common purpose in commemorating the life of Gandhi. Through newspapers, books, exhibitions, films, radio, records and television British men and women of all generations learned about Gandhi, many for the first time and in doing so have increasingly understood the problems of the Indians. This has helped to break down the barriers of understanding which is necessary in order to establish goodwill between all peoples, for which Gandhi worked and indeed gave his life.

In his address at the final tribute to the memory of Gandhiji, held at the Royal Albert Hall on 21st October 1969, before an audience of over 5,000 HRH The Prince of Wales said:—

“It is far easier to justify something obtained legitimately and peacefully than brutally and senselessly. The only trouble about this is that it requires effort, will-power and self-discipline. Some would have us believe these are out of date concepts, but as long as man has an ounce of humanity left, and remembers the example of Gandhi, he will survive. Let us show with concerted courage that honourable people exist in vast numbers, who refuse to see why barbaric violence should exist in what we optimistically call our civilization.”

This I believe is our heritage from Gandhiji, a frail, humble and yet thoroughly great man. Let us build on this and prove that man is not inhuman to man.



A Message from

Mr. R. M. Lodhia

*(Chairman, Mahatma Gandhi
Statue & Bursary Trust)*

It gives me a feeling of personal satisfaction to be associated with the occasion of the unveiling of the statue of Gandhiji.

Ever since the formation of the Mahatma Gandhi Statue Committee in 1961, I, together with my Committee in Ladysmith, strove to fulfil a cherished idea of establishing a Trust. Initially we experienced a little setback to our plans, but once people realized the intentions behind the formation of such a trust, support for our call became overwhelming. We are now in a proud position to record the names of two hundred sponsors who have donated R42,000 in the name of the Trust only eight years after its formation.

Their magnanimous gesture has contributed to a great measure in bringing to Ladysmith from India, a 9½ feet high, bronze statue of the great Mahatma, sculptured by the renowned Madhubhai Patel of Bombay, India.

The task of having to get the statue of such a legendary figure to South Africa was simplified by the co-operation of the Department of Indian Affairs in spite of numerous delicate issues. To the Department we owe a gratitude.

When the idea was propagated in India the response was well received in all circles of public life. Both the past Prime Ministers of India, the Late Shri Jawaharlal Nehru and the Late Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri have given their blessings to the scheme. In a letter to me, Shri Shastri had stated, "I am delighted to know from your letter of October 9th, 1965 that your Sabha proposes to install a large bronze statue of Mahatma Gandhi in the town of Ladysmith, Natal. It is an excellent idea to commemorate Gandhiji in this manner . . . I want to take this opportunity to send my best wishes and warmest felicitations to the members of your Sabha."

In India, a Statue Committee was formed and the members serving on that Committee gave me all the support I needed. My thanks go to them. The British India Steam Navigation Company also rallied to my assistance by transporting the statue free of freight charges.

There will be many, I am sure, in South Africa who would speculate on the reasons of my association with the trust of the Sanathan Dharma Sabha of Ladysmith when I live out in Durban, 200 miles away.

Among many things, the Sanathan Dharma Sabha is a religious institution open to all Hindus irrespective of language. It is the universality of its stand that has urged me to pursue with greater zeal and enthusiasm the work of the Sanathan Dharma Sabha.

In the name of the trust, a huge block of flats with shops and offices has been built and occupied and the income accruing from it would go towards the created bursary fund which will operate on a non-racial basis.

Above all, the statue and the Mahatma Gandhi House would be a living memorial to our great Saint and leader and would serve to keep alive his great teachings.

In this troubled world how much need there is for all of us to draw inspiration from the fountain of knowledge which Gandhi had bequeathed to mankind. May he dwell in everyone's heart.



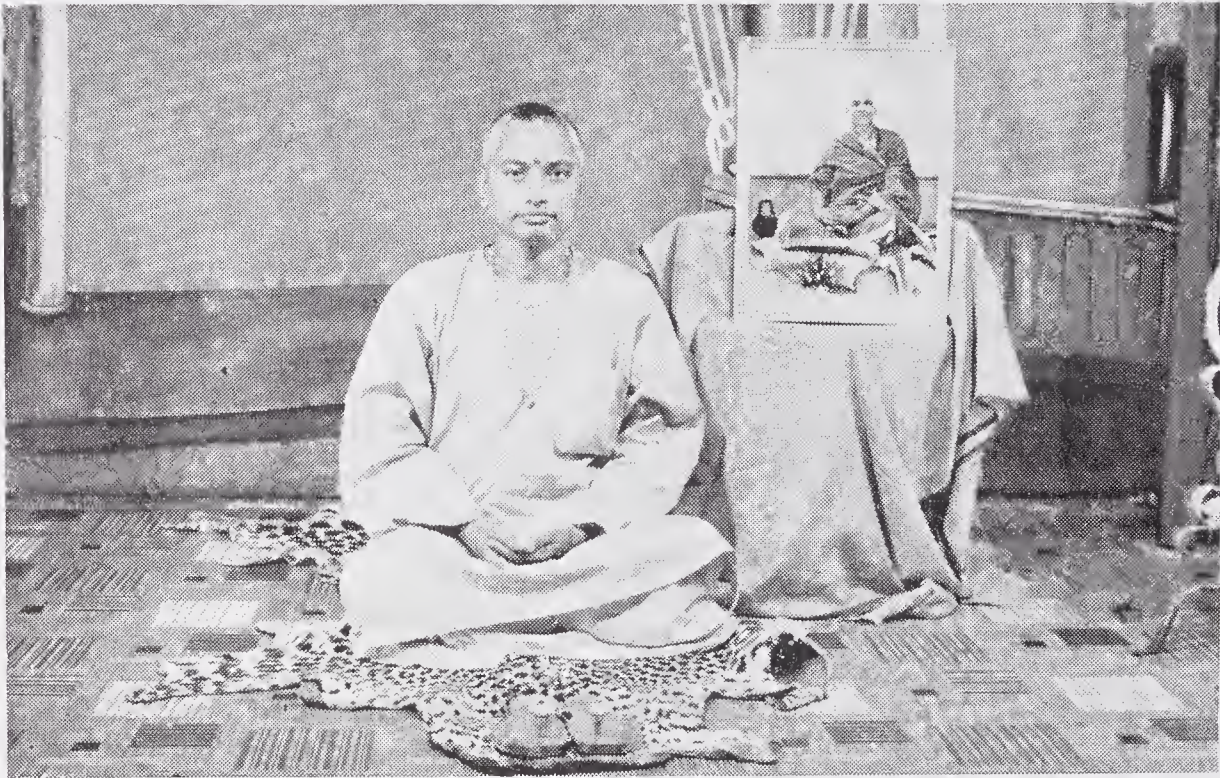
SHRI C. C. DESAI

DESAI CHANDULAL CHUNILAL, B.A. (Cantab.) C.I.E., (1945), I.C.S., (Retired). Swatantra Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha), from Sabarkantha (Gujarat). Son of Shri Chunilal Haribhai Desai. Born at Bhadran, District of Kaira, Gujarat, April, 27th 1900. Educated at Elphinstone College, Bombay and Cambridge University. Joined I.C.S. in 1923.

Director of Industries – C. P. & Behar, and Registrar of Co-operative Societies, 1937-38. Secretary to Government of C. P. & Behar – Department of Local Self-Government, Industry and Labour. Deputy Director-General of Civic Supply, Government of India. 1943-45. Member-Secretary of the Indian Tariff Board and later its Chairman (1945-47). Additional Secretary, Ministry of States, Government of India (1947-48). Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Govt. of India, (1948-50). Leader of the Indian Delegation to the Conference of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in Australia, 1948. Leader of the Indian Delegation to negotiate various Trade Treaties with Pakistan, Afghanistan, Switzerland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Australia and Ceylon, 1948-51. Leader of the Indian Steel Delegation to England and U.S.A. to negotiate loans for the Indian Government Schemes for the expansion of steel Industry in India. Secretary, Ministry of works, Production and Supply, 1951, and Works, Housing and Supply and Production, 1952. High Commissioner for India in Ceylon, 1953-54. High Commissioner for India in Pakistan, 1955-58. Chairman and Director of several large Companies in India.

Graduate in Natural Science and holder of Diploma in Agriculture and Anthropology, Cambridge University.

Travelled extensively in North America, Europe, Eastern Europe, Middle East, East Africa, Australia and Asia.



Swami VENKATESANANDA
Writer of "THE VOICE OF TRUTH"

SWAMI VENKATESANANDA

—CREST JEWEL

Born on 2nd January 1922 in Tanjore District, the Divine child Parthasarathy developed qualities like Druva and Prahlada. He joined the monastic order in 1945 as Swami Venkatesananda under the discipleship of the World renowned Saint Swami Sivanandaji of Rishikesh.

Indeed there is no higher compliment that a Guru can bestow on his disciple than what Siva has said of this illustrious aspirant: "Crest Jewel of my Mission, the resplendence of my work — will I ever see any one shine brighter than he, Swami Venkatesanandaji? Surely none have I seen so far."

To Gurudev Sivananda in his Jnana Yagna, Swami Venkatesananda had been a tower of strength. His capacity for untiring work is flabbergasting, his devotion to Guru matchless and adherence to the principles of Divine Life is simply awe-inspiring and worthy of emulation.

In 1961, the Swami with the Blessings of his Gurudev started on his foreign tour to propagate the teachings of his Gurudev. After a short tour of West Australia he went to Africa. From Israel in the North to Cape Town in the South, Madagascar and Mauritius he has captured the hearts of one and all and has brought people of all Faiths together under one common Goal.

During his South African tour Swami Venkatesananda consecrated the Lord Vishnu Temple of Ladysmith Natal, on the 7th February, 1965. Under his Divine Grace the Temple was officially opened.

THE VOICE OF TRUTH

By SWAMI VENKATESANANDA

There are chords in every human heart.
If only we know how to strike the right
chord, we bring out the music. —Anon

GOD IS TRUTH, said Gandhiji. Humanity had already begun to adore him as God, in his own life time.

In 1921 Gandhiji was touring Bihar. A puncture stalled the car at a spot where a 104 year-old woman was awaiting someone. His query elicited a queer answer: "My son, who is Mahatma Gandhi?" And, she explained to him why she wanted to see the Mahatma: "He is an Avatara, incarnation of God." Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru, in his foreword to Mr. Tendulkar's "Mahatma" has expressed an almost similar sentiment. Even they who did not see eye-to-eye with Gandhiji, admired him. Field-Marshal Smuts said of him: "He is one of the great men of the World."

Judges who tried and sentenced him to imprisonment, and even the Viceroys of India often recognised his saintliness. Bal Gangadhar Tilak went to the extent of dissuading him from politics: "Politics is a game of worldly people, and not of **Sadhus** (holy men)". Sir Winston Churchill called him a "half-naked faqir" (mendicant holy man) which Gandhiji considered a compliment. Abbas Tyabji, a former Chief Justice of Baroda said: "God! what an experience. I have so much love and affection for the common folk to whom it is now an honour to belong. It is the fakir's dress that has broken down all barriers" Pundit Motilal Nehru (Jawaharlal's father) confessed to a similar transformation of his life. "Gandhi had

struck some of the inner chords of Indian humanity," says B.R. Nanda.

Nay, not only of Indian humanity, but of the entire humanity. For when a modern weapon in a madman's hand struck Gandhiji down, the entire world mourned the passing of "a private citizen, without wealth, property, official title, official post, academic distinction, scientific achievement, or artistic gift" in the words of Louis Fischer. General George C. Marshall of the United States was right when he described Mahatma Gandhi as "the spokesman for the conscience of all mankind". He was the Voice of Truth, Voice of Dharma.

Gandhiji was born in the nineteenth century, on the 2nd October, 1869, to be exact. His mission was born in the twentieth century. It has had far-reaching results, and it still has — evidenced by the rapid pace at which colonies are being freed.

Yet, the panorama has changed. The climate has changed. Appearances always change in this world. But the truth remains unchanged. Yet, the powers of darkness continue to raise their standards in this world. Their costumes are different. Their conduct is different. The frail brown Indian who wrote apologetically from South Africa "I was the only available person" but otherwise had no qualification, was sure during the last years of his life that his method was the only answer to the ever-

recurring problem of human relationship. Gandhiji's life on earth ended on the 30th January, 1948. But his message is eternal. This eternal message has to be well digested and applied to mankind's life in this ever-changing world.

Mohandas was born a Gandhi; and Gandhi means a "grocer". In Gandhiji's grocery we have several things — political, ethical, social, psychological, and economic truths — all immensely valuable to us. The present monograph is not an attempt at either chronicling the important events of his life nor at viewing them in the perspective of Indian or world history. Able men have achieved that task. Here is a sketch of Gandhi, the Mahatma, the Great Soul.

THE FORMATIVE YEARS

Gandhiji's biographers have come to the unvarying conclusion that he was a self-made man. Yet, he himself reveals the hidden springs of moulding inspiration that made him what he was. He inherited, **he chose** to inherit, the firm determination of his father and the religious piety of his mother. But, surprisingly he learnt his famous political doctrine from his wife." I learnt the lesson of non-violence from my wife when I tried to bend her to my will," he once remarked. "Her determined resistance to my will on the one hand, and her quiet submission to the suffering, my stupidity involved on the other, ultimately made me ashamed of myself and cured me of my stupidity in thinking that I was born to rule over her; and in the end she became my teacher in non-violence."

Several of Gandhiji's biographers have followed his example and treated his boyhood as "ordinary". Gandhiji did so because he was looking at his own boyhood from the wrong end of the telescope and it looked insignificant except for its blunders. But, few of us could claim (as he did) that we never told a lie at school, that we had the moral courage to confess our thefts, that we had the keenness of wisdom to analyse our actions and abandon those which would (or even might) involve the compromise of our principles (if we had any), that even religious plays and films had stirred our hearts to emulate the divine characters portrayed in them; and fewer still can demonstrate that such juvenile enthusiasm as was generated by such experiences was consciously carried over by us to our middle age. Gandhiji did all this and a lot more. His boyhood witnessed a few escapades, no doubt, but fewer than that of most of us. But, there was this big difference. After each of these, he told himself "Never again" : and so it was, never again.

When he was thirteen he was married to Kas-

turbai who was also thirteen. His first son was born when he was sixteen. Gandhiji, in his autobiography, is bitter about this period of his life. He vehemently denounces what he calls "child-marriage". Yet, he (or rather he and Kasturbai) made a success of the marriage — a success which could well be the envy of "ideal adult love marriages" all over the world. Where there is a will there is a way; where the will is weak there is always someone to blame.

When Gandhiji was about 16, his father passed away. When the time came for a choice of a career, everyone wanted him to become the Prime Minister of one of those tiny native States in India, even as his own father and grand-father had been before him. He was not averse to this suggestion either, for that was what made him choose law in preference to his first-love, medicine. Sixty years later he could have become the Governor-General of the whole of India if he wanted to; but he was not interested — he had become the Ruler of the Heart of Mankind.

Many barriers had to be crossed before Gandhiji could become a barrister at law. He had the powerful wings of will power. Eighteen-year-old Gandhi defied the elders of the Modh Bania caste who threatened to excommunicate him if he went to England. He went. He had to go. Even he could not resist his will. It was God's will. He left behind him his beloved mother and his own family of his wife and son Harilal. He took with him a firm vow given to his mother that he would not touch wine, women and meat, during his stay abroad.

To Gandhiji a pledge or vow in the name of God carried extraordinary weight. "To pledge ourselves or to take an oath in the name of God or with Him as a witness, is not something to be trifled with. If having broken such an oath we violate our pledge, we are guilty before God and man. A man who lightly pledges his word and then breaks it becomes a man of straw," said Gandhiji on the 11th September, 1960, at the Imperial Theatre in Johannesburg. He had an innate passion for truth. At school he refused to cheat the inspector even at the instigation of a teacher; he gave up the meat-eating habit he then valued (as a young boy) lest it should lead him to falsehood; and now he adhered to his threefold vow given to his mother, against the heaviest odds. His was a life-long experiment in Truth, a fact which made Oxford Professor Zaehner regard him as a reincarnation of Yudhisthira, the man-of-truth of the Mahabharata. "Death is the appointed end of all life," was Gandhiji's conviction, and Eternal Truth was therefore more sacred than life.

Gandhiji tried several experiments in England.

But, foremost among them was vegetarianism as a way of life. Salt's book on vegetarianism transformed this pledged necessity into a life-long virtue. "Many such (Vegetarian) experiments taught me," he says, "that the real seat of taste was not the tongue but the mind" thus echoing an Indian scriptural axiom, "When the sense of taste is conquered, all the senses and mind are conquered". Step by unconscious step he was surely marching towards the pinnacle of self-conquest.

Vegetarianism brought him in touch with Sir Edwin Arnold, the author of one of the best translations of the Bhagavad Gita. To Gandhiji it was a case of love at first sight; he was ashamed that he had not read the Bhagavad Gita until the age of twenty. But from that year till his last breath Gita was his constant companion. He learnt it by heart; he inscribed the verses on the tablet of his heart; he became one with the Gita, the heart of the Gita. Mahadev Desai, his devoted Private Secretary, said "every moment of Gandhiji's life is a conscious effort to live the message of the Gita". Gandhiji himself pays his homage to the Gita in these immortal words: "When doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face and I see not one ray of light on the horizon, I turn to the Bhagavad Gita, and find a verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. My life has been full of external tragedies and if they have not left any visible effect on me, I owe it to the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita."

Gandhiji's was a strong personality. He derived great inspiration from the lives of Harischandra and Shravan Kumar ("I must become truthful like Harischandra; the others will become truthful too, in their own good time" he said), from the Bhagavad Gita, from the teachings of Jesus Christ ("the Sermon on the mount went straight to my heart"), from Ruskin's "unto the Last" (Gandhiji immediately decided "to change my life in accordance with the ideals of the book") but he often read his own views into them. If they did not obviously support him, he lent them his support by interpretation.

THE BIRTH OF A DEATHLESS MISSION

Gandhiji was called to the Bar on the 10th June, 1891. He enrolled in the High Court on the 11th June. He sailed for India the next day, without a moment's loss or extra-stay in England. But his dear mother did not live to see her Barrister-son who had faithfully kept his vow.

He tried to practise Law. He had not yet been "awakened"; he felt shy and diffident. Brother Lakshmidas was in difficulties; and Gandhiji tried

to intervene on his behalf with the British Political Agent. The discourteous way in which the future Mahatma was pushed out of the Agent's office "changed the course of my entire life", says he.

It made him leave India once again in 1893, as a qualified Barrister-at-Law, for South Africa. This time not to learn but to earn. It was in South Africa that shaped the Mahatma. It was in South Africa that he discovered Satyagraha, Soul-force and its ability to triumph over world-force. Whether he was pushed out of a railway compartment at Maritzburg or not he was knocked unconscious by a furious Pathan (a North-West Frontier Indian), or almost lynched by a mob... Gandhiji did not lose his balance of mind and in a Christ-like spirit refused to seek redress for personal grievances in a Court of law, refused to have the aggressors prosecuted, but forgave them. Hatred cannot be conquered by hatred, but only by love. The law of Love had to be applied at personal, social, religious and political levels.

The Mission of Gandhiji had begun. The law-suit which brought him to South Africa was quietly settled out of Court, under his aegis, of course.

One often hears of a "second front" during the last World War. But Gandhiji fought simultaneously on three fronts: (a) with himself, (b) with the people whom he wished to defend, and (c) with those from whom those people had to be defended. It was the first that gave him the soul-force the second gave him the moral justification and strength and then the third was won over. He told the South African Indians whose cause he espoused to put their own house in order. He gave them a four-point plan: "Tell the truth even in business; Adopt more saintly habits; Forget caste and religious divisions; Learn English."

What superficially appeared to be political campaigns were to him "Experiments with Truth." He believed that this Truth dwelt in all beings; he believed that when the imperfections which were manifestations of untruth were removed, the Truth would be revealed in each person. He himself has said in his autobiography: "What I want to achieve — what I have been striving and pining to achieve these thirty years — is self-realization, to see God face to face, to attain Moksha. I live and move and have my being in pursuit of this goal. All that I do by way of speaking and writing with all my ventures in the political field, are directed to the same end." He revealed that "Often in my progress I have had faint glimpses of the Absolute Truth, God, and daily the conviction is growing upon me that He alone is real and all else is unreal." He effected the internal unveiling of Truth and openly invited all those who dared to make similar

experiments to share the glorious Vision of Truth with him. The people whose cause he apparently seemed to espouse as well as the people who appeared to be his "opponents" were both invitees to the feast of the Infinite. They had to make the necessary sacrifices (the former their fear and inferiority complex, the latter their hate and superiority complex) in order to realise this Truth. The unprecedented and epoch-making technique called Satyagraha with which Gandhiji won independence for India and undying fame for himself was developed by him in South Africa. It called for winning an opponent over, not vanquishing him. It demanded resistance to injustice, but it forbade violence in thought, word or deed. It meant open defiance of constituted authority; but it would never take advantage of the opponent's natural or occasional difficulties. The purpose is defeated if the opponent feels defeated.

Satyagraha for Gandhiji was "the technique of non-violent action—for rectifying injustices, righting wrongs and ironing out our conflicts". Two wrongs did not make one right, nor did the destruction of any enemy connote "ironing out our conflicts". Satyagraha banished both fear and hate; it is "the ideal which is both against cowardliness of hidden revenge and the cowed submission of the terror-stricken". Gandhiji defined the object of Satyagraha as always to convert the opponent by love, if necessary by "suffering at his hands". Ahimsa (non-violence or love) is the "other side" of Truth: one without the other does not exist.

Satyagraha has been translated into "firmness in Truth". What is truth? God is Truth. The Reality in every being is Truth. "All men are brothers," (to borrow the title of the Anthology of Gandhiji's sayings published by the UNESCO) is the truth. Gandhiji recognised that, however much men endeavoured to deny this in their hearts (where God, the Absolute Truth, dwelt) men did realise that "All men are brothers". Hence Gandhiji did not believe in fighting to injure or to kill; he strove to resurrect this Truth that lay buried in the heart of the opponent under a lot of prejudice and ignorance.

Again, "All men are free" is the Truth. To Gandhiji political freedom was only half the battle, perhaps less. "My conception of freedom is no narrow conception," he wrote in 1942. "It is co-extensive with the freedom of man in all his majesty." Man should be free from his own enslaving tendencies and habits, from his own evil and animal nature, from crippling fear, impotent cowardice and diabolical hate. Here, again, he did not believe in coercion, but he tried to bring about an awakening. For to him the Truth was that there was this Higher Nature in every human being which is the reflection of the Truth or God in the human

heart. Gandhiji valued the freedom so greatly that he gave his co-workers entire freedom to differ from him, to reject him and to do so again even if once before they had been proved wrong.

This implicit trust in the goodness of human nature and the irrepressible eagerness to love the enemy removed all enmity from the enemy's heart. Hence, both in South Africa and India, his political "opponents" had "the highest regard for him" in the words of General Smuts. No one could think of Gandhiji without a feeling of respect and love—not even killer Godse who bowed to him and "wished him well" (in his own words) before shooting him.

Gandhiji defined Satyagraha as "the vindication of truth not by infliction of suffering on the opponent but on oneself. When we characterise Satyagraha as a "fight" we raise a serious misunderstanding. Satyagraha was fight against misunderstanding. Hence Gandhiji always trusted his "opponents". The common enemy was mistrust. Prejudice, condemning individuals for the fault of a system, blaming a community for the sins of a few members, were unknown to him. His comrades in Satyagraha in South Africa were H.S. Polak, Kallenbach and Miss Schlesin. There were many Englishmen and women in his camp in India.

What was extraordinary with Gandhiji's Satyagraha fight was that he would always inform the other party of the anticipated move; there was no secrecy. Though this was often labelled "Ultimatum", in fact and definitely for Gandhiji it was not so. It was a definite affirmation of the sincerity of Gandhiji's purpose and of his inflexible determination to carry the project through; and it was also an appeal to the higher nature in the other party to see the Light of Truth. There was no Pearl Harbour even in the non-violent tactics of Gandhiji; It was all done in the open. Suspicion of the opponent and refusal to trust him even if he had several times before betrayed such trust, was again unknown to Gandhiji. This inborn nature in him he demonstrated both in South Africa and in India in the countless negotiations he conducted with the Government of the two countries, by calling off Satyagraha movements at the slightest hint from the Government that they were prepared to negotiate. He was ever ready to meet the other party half-way in a compromise which was another corner stone of the edifice of Satyagraha. "A Satyagrahi bids goodbye to fear," he said. "He is therefore never afraid of trusting the opponent. Even if the opponent plays him false twenty times, the Satyagrahi is ready to trust him the twenty-first time—for an implicit trust in human nature is the very essence of his creed."

Since "love" and not "ill-will" characterised his attitude to "opponents," when the latter were

THE GREAT MARCH TO THE TRANSVAAL



Amongst security prisoners.

in distress, he immediately extended his hand of sympathy and help, unilaterally. Such was the spirit in which he organised the Indian Ambulance Corps during the Boer War in South Africa and such was the spirit in which he joined the Army, with a group of Indians during what has come to be known as the "Zulu rebellion" in 1906.

Gandhiji felt that Truth and Non-violence (Satyam and Ahimsa) could be effectively practised only if "Brahmacharya" was added to them. Brahmacharya means continence and eventually control of all the senses and the eradication of their cravings. Again in South Africa, in 1906, Gandhiji took the vow of life-long celibacy, at the age of thirty-seven. "Perfect Brahmacharis," he said, "are perfectly sinless. They are therefore near God. They are like God". From 1906 till the end of his life, Gandhiji was a perfect Brahmachari and no wonder he was ever near God.

These three vows together implied "non-possession" or voluntary poverty. Even at that early age (in his thirties) Gandhiji was so thoroughly consumed by his mission in life that he was completely detached from family ties and all cares had dropped away. When the people of South Africa gave him costly presents as their farewell gifts, he created a community fund with them.

Gandhiji successfully conducted several Satyagraha Campaigns in South Africa. The humble barrister was able to command the following of thousands of Indians and the respect and love of many Europeans. He had his first jail experience, too, in South Africa. All that is part of history. Louis Fischer in his "Life of Mahatma Gandhi" says: "The purity of Gandhi's methods made it difficult for Smuts to oppose him. Victory came to Gandhi not when Smuts had no more strength to fight but when he had no more heart to fight him." And, he concludes: "Every generation re-enacts the battle for its rights—or it loses them. But while individuals in several continents have practised passive resistance, nobody except Mohandas K. Gandhi has ever led a successful, non-violent mass, civil disobedience campaign. He possessed the personal qualities which aroused the necessary qualities in the community." The last sentence is the key to Gandhiji.

Thousands followed him in South Africa during the Satyagraha campaigns. Literally millions followed him in India during similar Satyagraha campaigns in that country. Many in both countries actually laid down their lives. How did he manage to get such a following? By being a true leader. To lead is to be in the front all the time; to sit comfortably in an air conditioned office and give the lead is a misnomer—it is "pushing". People do not like to be pushed; but they are ever ready to follow a leader. Gandhiji had said in his

speech at the Imperial Theatre in Johannesburg on the 11th September, 1906, "Although we are going to pledge in a body, no one may imagine that default on the part of one or of many can absolve the rest from their obligation. Everyone must be true to his pledge even unto death, no matter what others do". On every such occasion he made it clear that even if none followed him but his own shadow, he would carry out the project: "... even if every one else flinched leaving me alone to face the music, I am confident that I would not violate my pledge".

When during the first term in a South African jail, he and General Smuts had reached a compromise, Gandhiji agreed to voluntary registration by Indians. On his release, however, he had to face a suspicious and hostile crowd of Indians one of whom threatened to kill him if Gandhiji applied for registration. Yet, he went to the registration office

as always, the first to fulfil his own pledge. Consequences were immaterial, Truth was paramount. The man who threatened him with death, meant it! He waylaid Gandhiji and struck him unconscious. The wounded saint, on recovering consciousness had only two thoughts: the assailant must be set free "(he thought he was doing right, and I have no desire to prosecute him)". and he must fulfil his promise to get himself registered. The Registrar of Asiatics who was brought to his bedside began to weep: his heart melted by the rare example of truth and love.

Gandhiji was the first person who raised jail-going for patriotic reasons from a shame to a virtue. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the First President of the Indian Republic, says: "The idea of voluntarily going to jail was a novel one, not only for me but for the whole country as well. Till Gandhiji came we did not do anything that would, in the ordinary course, entail imprisonment. Rather, we thought it would be a piece of cleverness on our part to do things in such a manner as would enable us to avoid going to jail. If we wanted to talk sedition, we would do it; but even while we did so, we would think of Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code and would use such language as would enable us to keep out of trouble. If a man was prosecuted, lawyers were called in to defend him, and everything necessary was done to get him off. Hardly anyone ever admitted his guilt. Never had we knowingly taken upon ourselves the kind of risk we did at the instance of Gandhiji."

Today Gandhiji and his Satyagraha are part of world history. We are looking at the man and his method from the vantage-point of their glorious and successful achievements. Gandhiji's trials, his incarcerations, are written in letters of gold; for we feel that the end has justified the means adopted. But that was far, far from Gandhiji's own mind at

that time. He was an optimist, and he hoped he would win; but he was not a prophet and he was not sure he would win, though he was sure of the success of the method. Guaranteed the "end" that Gandhiji obtained, I am sure most of us would not mind going to jail: but when he went to jail there was no such guarantee. If the movement had failed, history might regard him as a foolish rebel or even as a psychopath working out unconscious criminal tendencies! He had moral and spiritual courage. For him a right end did not justify wrong means; but the means themselves had to be and they were right. There was nothing shameful in doing the right.

Gandhiji was the leader in South African Satyagraha when he was arrested; he pleaded guilty and asked the Judge to impose the heaviest penalty on him. Again, in what history recognises as "The Great Trial" during the Satyagraha of 1922 in India, Gandhiji had the moral courage to plead guilty and say "—I have no desire whatsoever to conceal from this court the fact that to preach disaffection towards the existing system of Government has to become almost a passion with me I do not ask for mercy. I do not plead any extenuating act. I am here, therefore, to invite and cheerfully submit to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen——". Earlier than this, in 1917 in Champaran he had told a Magistrate: "I want to show that I have disregarded the order served upon me, not for want of respect for lawful authority, but in obedience to the higher law of my being, the voice of my conscience." This was Gandhiji, the Mahatma. **This** was the Apostle of Truth. One to whom Truth was more valuable than life. That was the secret of his victory. But let us not forget for a single moment, victory itself was NOT his goal. His goal was truth itself: Truth was the means, and truth the end.

Gandhiji loved the jail! He read a lot in jail. He "thought" and contemplated a lot in jail. Even jail labour did not make him flinch. When it was suggested that it would have been better to pay the fine and avoid going to jail, Gandhiji retorted: "Such thoughts made one really a coward. Besides, jail has its good sides: only one warden, whereas in the free life there are many——. The real road to happiness lies in going to jail and under-going sufferings and privations there in the interest of one's country and religion." It is good to remember the last sentence. Gandhiji did not suffer from the pathological martyr-complex and seek jail-going for its own sake or for the sake of the renown it might bring. He sought every available means of avoiding a confrontation with authority. He tried compromise; he tried pleading. He elicited public

sympathy and sought public opinion to create a climate favourable for a healthy change in the attitude of the powers that be. Satyagraha to him was a "righteous war", though (or because it was) non-violent; and even Satyagraha could be resorted to only as the last resort.

This was evident in his dealings with both the Government of South Africa and the British Government. He sought and availed himself of every opportunity of meeting the leaders and the authorities and ironing out the difficulties and the differences.

And when the extreme step of Satyagraha had to be taken, Gandhiji proved himself to be an able leader and administrator. He prepared himself and his co-workers thoroughly and systematically for the struggle ahead. He was a methodist. Nothing was haphazard either with himself or in the conduct of his co-workers. He worked out all possible eventualities and armed himself and his co-workers to deal with them. For the Satyagraha in South Africa (1913) he prepared himself and the other Satyagrahis in what he called the Tolstoy Farm, off Johannesburg. Here is Louis Fischer's description of the farm and the life in it.

"Herman Kallenbach bought 1100 acres of land at Lawley, twenty-one miles outside Johannesburg and, on the 30th May, 1910, gave it to the Satyagrahis free of any rent or charge. Here religion was wed to politics. Gandhi called it the Tolstoy Farm.

"The farm had over a thousand orange, apricot and plum trees, two wells, a spring and one house. Additional houses were built of corrugated iron. Gandhi and his family came to live on the farm and so did Kallenbach.

"I prepare the bread that is required on the farm," Gandhiji wrote to a friend in India. "The general opinion about it is that it is well made. We put in yeast and no baking powder. We grind our own wheat. We have just prepared some marmalade from the orange grown on the farm. I have also learnt how to prepare caramel coffee. It can be given as a beverage even to babies. The passive resisters on the farm have given up the use of tea and coffee, and taken to caramel coffee prepared on the farm. It is made from wheat which is first baked in a certain way and then ground. We intend to sell surplus production of the above three articles to the public later on. Just at present, we are working as labourers on the construction work ——" There were no servants.

"Gandhi was baker and caramel and marmalade maker and much more besides. Kallenbach went to stay in a Trappist monastery for German Catholic monks to master the art of sandal making. This he then taught to Gandhi who taught it to others. Surplus sandles were sold to friends. As an

architect, Kallenbach knew something of carpentry and headed that department. Gandhi learned to make cabinets, chests of drawers and school benches. But they had no chairs and no beds; everybody slept on the ground and, except in inclement weather, in the open. Each person got two blankets and a wooden pillow. Gandhiji likewise sewed jackets for his wife and he later boasted that she wore them.

"Gandhiji was a general manager. The population of the farm which varied with arrests and other circumstances, consisted originally of forty young men, three old men, five women and between twenty and thirty children, of whom five were girls. There were Hindus, Moslems, Christians and Parsis among them, vegetarians and meat-eaters, smokers and non-smokers and they spoke Tamil, Telugu, Gujarati, etc. As if these conditions did not create enough problems, Gandhi created some more.

"Smoking and alcohol drinking were strictly prohibited. Residents could have meat if they wished but after a little propaganda from the general manager, none ever asked for it. Gandhi assisted in the cookhouse and kept the women there from quarrelling.

"He also supervised the sanitation, which was primitive, and taught people not to spit. "Leaving Nightsoil" cleaning the nose, or spitting on the road is a sin against God and humanity", he told the community.

Occasionally, Kallenbach had business in town and Gandhi still had legal cases. The rule was that if you went on an errand or shopping trip for the commune you could travel by train, third class; but if the journey was private or for fun (children liked to go on picnics to Johannesburg) you had to walk and for economy take dry refreshments with you. Gandhiji frequently walked the twenty-one miles to the city, starting at 2 p.m. and returning the same night. He said it did them all a lot of good. One day, he recalls, "I walked fifty miles on foot".

"Gandhi attributed his physical stamina and that of the other communards to pure living and healthy diet. Breakfast was at 7, Lunch at 11, dinner at 5.30, prayers at 7.30, bedtime at 9".

It was hard discipline! But the fact that the leader Gandhiji himself and a millionaire like Kallenbach who always lived a life of luxury had voluntarily imposed the discipline upon themselves made it pleasant for their co-workers. No wonder, therefore, that when the time for action arrived, the Satyagrahis behaved in an exemplary manner.

But when the movement was launched, it brought its own problems. As part of the movement in the middle of 1913, the Indian miners in

Newcastle went on strike; and the strike dragged on for months. Gandhiji had to provide for the boarding and lodging of as many as five thousand strikers at one time (the same number, strangely, which Lord Jesus had to deal with at one time, though the circumstances were entirely different.) Later with about 2200 men and women Gandhiji marched into Transvaal; and Kallenbach himself paid a tribute to Gandhiji's followers in these words: "They are brave men. They will not injure you in person or in property, they will not fight with you, but enter the Transvaal they will, even in the face of your gunfire. They are not the men to beat a retreat from the fear of your bullets or spears. They propose to melt and I know they will melt your hearts by suffering."

An amusing situation arose when Gandhiji, Kallenbach and Polak were arrested one after the other and during the trial, judge Theodore Jooste said that the court would not convict the accused merely upon his pleading guilty and demanded witnesses. Kallenbach and Polak appeared as witnesses against the "third". All three happily marched into jail.

All this led eventually to the Gandhi-Smuts agreement on the 30th June, 1914, and on the 18th July, 1914, Mahatmaji sailed for England, leaving South Africa for good. Of him General Smuts wrote in 1939: "It was my fate to be the antagonist of a man for whom even then I had the highest respect. He never forgot the Human background of the situation, never lost his temper or succumbed to hate, and preserved his gentle humour even in the most trying situations."

UNPRECEDENTED WEAPONS AND UNUSUAL WAR

For Gandhiji the path in India was not as smooth as it was in South Africa. He himself was satisfied with the temper of the Satyagraha movement in South Africa which he characterised as "more spiritual" than was possible in India. But Satyagraha was the method to be applied to the gigantic problem that faced the people of India—freedom from foreign rule.

Gandhiji reached Bombay on the 9th January 1915. During parties and receptions that were given to the hero, he often espoused the cause of Britain and canvassed public support for her in her (first World) War with Germany. He loved the ideals for which Britain stood. "My patriotism is subservient to my religion," he explained. Louis Fischer says; "He was too religious to serve one land, one race, one caste, one family, one person, or even one religion. His religion was humanity."

That was in April 1915, but in September, 1915, Gandhiji gave the people of India a bit of his

mind! The occasion was the opening of the Hindu University at Benares. It could have been Lord Jesus chasing out the money-changers from the Temple. Gandhiji told his audience the Truth: and the audience consisted not only of students but all sorts of dignitaries (Rajas, Maharajahs and officials) whose vanity was pricked by Gandhiji. After august pronouncements and flowery orations came this little man's direct thrust of simple home-truths. Gandhiji spoke a lot, wrote a lot; but they were part of his activity . . . a very small part . . . for he was a man of action. He had not yet commenced to act in India but gave a hint at Benares: "If you of the student world to which my remarks are supposed to be addressed consider for one moment that the spiritual life, for which this country is noted and has no rival, can be transmitted through the lip, pray believe me you are wrong. You will never be able merely through the lip to give the message that India, I hope, will one day deliver to the world; . . . I venture to suggest to you that we have now reached almost to the end of our resources in speech making and that it is not enough that our eyes be feasted, but it is necessary that our hearts have got to be touched, our hands and feet have got to be moved." Whether the hearts of the "dignitaries" were moved or not, their feet moved, and they were unable to bear the unpleasant truth that they were all exploiters and oppressors of the poor and the misleaders of the middle class. But, Gandhiji was after them for the rest of his life: their hearts had to be changed. Even they were his "children", he was the Father (Bapu) of all India and Indians.

Champaran in Bihar opened a new chapter in the history of India. What happened in the indigo plantations there in 1917 happened throughout the Indian subcontinent in later years. Gandhiji was at Lucknow in connection with the Indian National Congress annual session in December, 1916. The very soul of India came to him in the garb of a poor peasant and narrated the hardship that the like of him were subjected to in Champaran. Gandhiji went some time later. The work there took him a year. But what a year it was!

When he constituted himself as a commission to investigate the grievances of the indigo cultivators, the wealthy foreign indigo planters and their friends, high officials in the Government, intervened: At first by threatening word of mouth and then by magisterial order, they asked Gandhiji to leave the district. He disobeyed. He was summoned to the Court. He obeyed. Lawyers were getting ready to defend him. He pleaded guilty. The court adjourned and asked Gandhiji to furnish a bail: Gandhiji refused and courted imprisonment. The Judge was puzzled. There was no precedent. This was something new in the legal history of

India. He let Gandhiji go without bail and asked higher authorities for instructions. In the meantime Gandhiji asked his lawyer-friends point-blank: "If they send me to jail, what are you going to do?" They consulted one another and announced "We will follow you". The Prophet of Satyagraha declared: "The battle of Champaran is won." The case was dropped. He was invited by the Governor to see him. A Commission of Enquiry emerged from the interview, of which Gandhiji himself was a member. The peasants won. It was a victory for all the poor people of India. It was a sample of the later struggle and success. It was a sample of the freedom that was to come. For the first time the poor oppressed man freed himself from the oppressive fear of the oppressor.

Fearlessness was the first of the First Principles of Satyagraha. Babu Rajendra Prasad, one of the Lawyers who defended Gandhiji by offering to follow him to jail, and who later became the first president of the Republic of India, has given us in his graphic account of the Champaran Campaign the lessons they learnt from Gandhiji. People were afraid of the police and even Gandhiji's assistants fearfully resented the presence of police when interviewing peasants: Gandhiji dispelled this fear and asked the assistants to ignore the policemen. "We must become fearless and we must have confidence in ourselves," he said when he dismissed the idea that it would be better to have an Englishman (C.F. Andrews) in Gandhiji's "camp" to be able to deal with the British officials better. He taught the members of his camp many lessons in truth: "a decision once taken should not be given up". We should not make use of any paper which came to us in a secretive manner . . . If an appointment was fixed for a particular time, he would arrive at the exact moment. He made well-to-do lawyers and aristocrats do their own work and dispense with servants. He forbade them from observing any caste distinctions within his camp: "When we were all engaged upon one task, he asked, why should we not also regard ourselves as belonging to one caste?" (In the true spirit of the Bhagavad Gita which reveals that caste distinctions are based on "nature" and "work"). He taught them to handle public funds very carefully and economically: "We saw . . . that he was . . . careful even to the extent of trying to save every piece he could. We noticed that when he could do with a postcard, he never used an envelope. He did not like the smallest bit of paper to be wasted. The public may not know this, but many of his most powerful articles and most of his important resolutions of the Congress and other organisations with which he was associated, were drafted on slips of paper which other people would have thrown away into the waste-paper basket. The in-

sides of the envelopes, and the blank sides of telegrams, letters and documents were utilised by him for this purpose." In the words of Louis Fischer, village upliftment was Gandhiji's first freedom. And, Gandhiji undertook "the task of education, cleanliness and sanitation in the villages" of Champaran, once the tenants' problems were solved. President Rajendra Prasad (from whose book the above quotations have been taken) says: "Till that time, it was enough to hold a session of the Provincial Conference and pass resolutions; to attend the annual session of the Congress; to donate to the Congress; to write something in the newspaper; and if one happened to be a member of the Legislative Council, to put some questions and deliver some speeches . . . There was no contact with the masses." To Gandhiji such contact came first. He also taught his followers a unique secret of achievement: "Gandhiji would generally take in hand those tasks which were difficult to achieve, for he knew that if he succeeded in a difficult task, success in other fields of activity would come as a matter of course"; Gandhiji insisted that public work must depend upon public support, not on accumulated wealth: "... public work could be carried on only if the people helped and came forward with the funds required for it. If there was any public work to which they were not prepared to contribute funds, it should be understood that the work itself was such as did not interest them or meet with their approval." Above all, "though he was very firm in his own convictions, he was equally firm in respecting the viewpoints of others". It was not always possible for his associates and even "disciples" to agree with him; often they did not understand him and followed him just because they had no alternative. Dr. Rajendra Prasad says: "To him it (spinning) was a sacred duty: and he would carry it out with the devotion which he imported into his prayers. To him, the charkha (spinning wheel) was the means by which he could come face to face with Daridranarayana, the God of the poor and the disinherited. Could we but appreciate this underlying principle, simplicity would enter our way of life; we would never be dazzled by big factories, nor become a party to the deprivation of the means of livelihood of the poor, and look upon manual labour with the respect which is its due . . . But we failed to appreciate all these points and were content with looking upon khaddar (handspun-handwoven cloth) merely as a uniform." But whereas he gave his disciples the greatest freedom of thought and even action, this could by no means be stretched to include unethical thought or action. There the tolerant and loving Gandhiji became flaming fire. Mahatmaji . . . held that a man who was not straight forward in matters of money or who was not good in his

private life could not be straight forward or good in his public life.' Louis Fischer narrates how, when Manilal Gandhi had lent Sabarmati Ashram money to his own brother Harilal, Gandhiji dismissed Manilal from the Ashram, fasted for his son's misdemeanour and compelled Manilal to atone for the misdeed; a thing which the heads of most organisations would ignore if not justify. The eleven vows which Gandhiji enunciated every day during prayer, he himself adhered to strictly and expected others associated with him to do so to the best of their ability: and they were "the vows of non-violence, truth, non-possession, brahmacharya, non-acquisition, physical labour, conquest of the palate, self-reliance, equal respect for all religions, swadeshi, and abolition of untouchability".

Even before he went to Champaran, Mahatmaji had established in 1915 an ashram near Ahmedabad, at Sabarmati, in order to train Satyagrahis. The experiments he conducted in this direction in South Africa (at the Phoenix and Tolstoy farm Ashrams) inspired him to found one in Gujarat in India. When very soon the Ashram was in financial difficulties brought on by Gandhiji's inflexible determination to admit a Harijan family in consequence of which many of his regular supporters deserted him, a rich millowner of Ahmedabad, Ambalal Sarabhai, anonymously came to his rescue. Anasuya, Ambalal's sister, was devoted to Gandhiji and Saraladevi, Ambalal's wife, was like Gandhiji's blood-sister.

But that did not prevent Gandhiji from espousing the cause of the textile workers and inspire them to go on strike! Ambalal was the leader of the millowners; and Gandhiji was the leader of the striking millworkers. And, Anasuya actively supported the Mahatma. Gandhiji always sought this freedom to follow one's own conscience and was therefore averse to identify himself with any party or even nation. Says, Louis Fischer: "Mahatma Gandhi always resisted politics. He regarded his South African work as moral and social, therefore, religious . . . He preferred the warm bond of human affection to the cold tongue of a party programme." This was recognised by the British Government who in 1919 in a Government publication remarked that Gandhiji's "readiness to take up the cudgels on behalf of any individual or class whom he regarded as being oppressed has endeared him to the masses of the country". He gave evidence of this till his last breath. During the last weeks of his life, he was accused of supporting the Muslims and the Government of Pakistan against the people of his own religion and the Government run by his own disciples!

Gandhiji urged the textile workers not to return to the mills till the millowners agreed to arbitration. The strike dragged on. The strikers'

morale was waning. One day one of Gandhiji's associates overheard a worker remark: "After all Gandhiji and Anasuyabehn have nothing to lose. They move about in cars and have enough to eat." It touched the deepest chord of Gandhiji's heart and Gandhiji announced his first fast. His logic on this occasion was simple: **he** instigated the workers to strike and **he** should be the first to share its consequences. He did say that the fast should not have a coercive influence on the millowners. Yet, they agreed to arbitration and the strike came to a conclusion, with Gandhiji's fast.

Gandhiji fasted on several occasions during his life, but on each occasion he explained that it was for "self-purification" for only a man of purified heart could be a Satyagrahi; it was to atone for the sins of oneself or those with whom the Satyagrahi identified himself. Of these the most important ones were the twenty-one day fast, undertaken for Hindu-Muslim unity in 1924, and to inspire his co-workers to plunge themselves in the mission of removal of untouchability in 1933 and a shorter seven-day fast to prevent separate electorates of Harijans in 1932 which had a profound influence on the whole nation. But "fasting for the sake of personal gain is nothing short of intimidation" said Gandhiji. "I can fast against my father to cure him of a vice, but I may not in order to get from him an inheritance." He also said "I fasted to reform those who loved me, you cannot fast against a tyrant".

Providence placed a Mahatma in politics. He had identified himself with India and her poverty-stricken millions. He strove to liberate himself, to uplift self with the Self (in the words of Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, Chapter VI, verse 5) The force of his loving identification lifted all Indians out of slavery. India attained independence because Gandhiji had attained independence of self, Moksha, Liberation, Salvation or Enlightenment. For Gandhiji political freedom had a different meaning from what it implies to us. It was part of the overall freedom of the Self. It was not the gift of the ruler, but the deserved earning of the ruled. Hence he was constantly campaigning to raise the moral of the masses in India: and thus almost involuntarily he endeared himself to them. Who knows, he might never have actively participated in Indian politics, nor become the leader of a single, Congress, party. But circumstances forced him.

The first was the Rowlatt Act which, passed by the Government in 1919, put India in a perpetual state of emergency and in Gandhiji's words was "unjust, subversive of the principles of liberty and destructive of the elementary rights of individuals". Gandhiji was in Madras. An idea came to him early one morning when he was neither sleeping

nor awake, that a nation-wide hartal should be observed in protest against the Rowlatt Act. (Hartal is a "General strike"). This was his first political action in India.

It was a prelude to Satyagraha. Hundreds signed the Satyagraha pledge. Explaining it, Gandhiji said: "Even such a mighty government as the Government of India will have to yield if we are true to our pledge. For the pledge is no small thing. It means a change of heart. It is an attempt to **introduce the religious spirit into politics** We may no longer believe in the doctrine of 'tit for tat'; we may not meet hatred with hatred, violence with violence, evil with evil, but we have to make a continuous and persistent effort to return good for evil . . . Nothing is impossible." Just then President Woodrow Wilson of America had remarked that "if the moral force behind the League of Nations Covenant did not suffice, physical force would". Gandhiji hoped to reverse the process; his was "an attempt to revolutionize politics and restore moral force to its original station".

After a few days, Gandhiji hastily withdrew the Satyagraha campaign which according to him was a "Himalayan miscalculation" because it had given rise to sporadic outbursts of violence. He had taken the preparedness of the people for granted.

The readiness with which the Indians in South Africa responded had perhaps given rise to complacency and overoptimism and made him overlook the size and diversity of the Indian people. B.R. Nanda assures us that, "violence on the part of the Government he did not fear, as it could strengthen the hearts and swell the ranks of non-co-operators. Violence on the part of the people, he dreaded . . ." He undertook a short fast to atone for the miscalculation. His movement was throughout spiritual and it was this spirit that mattered. He was unafraid of criticism and had the courage to admit his miscalculation. Nanda lists the questions that his critics asked, among them, "Was the Congress a political institution or a testing ground for the inner conflicts of a Mahatma? Were the sacrifices of the nation to go in vain, and were the non-co-operators to continue to rot indefinitely in jail?" Such were the angry question shot at Gandhi by a bewildered and indignant following, not realising that bewilderment and indignation were antithesis to Gandhiji's spirit. We shall see what a wonderful effect this step-down had on the future Satyagraha.

On the 13th April, the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre took place and General Dyer who initiated this crime added to it by ordering all people who passed by a street in which an English headmistress of a school had been attacked to go on all fours (the "crawling order") and decreed that those who

disobeyed this order would be publicly whipped (at a specially erected "whipping post"). A month and half later, the British Government repudiated these actions and declared that the crawling order "offended against every canon of civilized government". But the Viceroy exonerated the General who found many supporters even in England; and, thus, Gandhiji was drawn into Indian politics, into the thick of it.

It was during the conference (Khilafat, meant to defend caliphate in Turkey) that Gandhiji found a title for the new movement that he was about to start in India, in answer to the Jallianwala Bagh massacre . . . Non-co-operation. "Non-co-operation with evil is as much a duty as co-operation with good" was his theme. He advocated the renunciation of British-conferred titles, boycott of all British-created institutions like the Government schools, Courts, etc. and even the army. Boycott of foreign cloth worked wonders: huge bonfires reduced foreign cloth and dress to ashes. Mahatmaji became the nation's idol. Louis Fischer says: "Everything in Gandhiji's personality and record helped the people to identify themselves with him and venerate him. Even sceptics were captivated by his courage, indestructible vitality, good humour, near-toothless smile, selflessness, self-confidence and unlimited faith in people . . . In a nation that was powerless, Gandhiji became a symbol of strength. In a nation of slaves, he behaved like a free man. Finally, he was a man of God."

Simultaneously with the boycott of foreign cloth, Gandhiji advocated spinning: the charkha became a symbol of India's independence. Gandhiji elevated spinning to the level of a religious practice. He used it as his rosary, its rhythm resounded in his ears "Ram, Ram, Ram, Ram," From then onwards wherever he was he would spin for some time daily; even during conferences he would spin; in jail or during illness he would spin. During the 1940's he invented an effective method to make everyone who wore khaddar spin: They could buy hand-spun-hand-woven cloth only if they paid for it in part in handspun yarn! I remember that during this period even we civil servants who had adopted the khaddar for our wear had to buy the spinning-wheel and ply it for an hour a day! To Gandhiji this "constructive programme" was as important as the political programme.

But even in the "non-co-operation" there was a rift in the lute and there were people like C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru who differed from him and wanted to co-operate with the Government to enter the legislatures and wreck the Government machinery. The Swaraj Party was formed by the dissident members but Gandhiji by

his spirit of compromise held them all together at least to himself! Public work is a delicate task and demands greater skill than rope-walking. Gandhiji knew that all the people were not of the same temperament and some may not even like constructive work; he allowed them to go their own way, get themselves elected to the ineffective legislatures and to find out for themselves that his way was better. Even if they were ready to abandon him, he was not prepared to abandon them. They differed from him. He argued with them. They left the political camp but were still in his heart as he in theirs. Soon, disillusioned, they came back to him: He accepts them with open arms, never once saying "I told you so". Even here he had extraordinary moral and spiritual strength not only to see the other man's point of view but to adopt it in preference to his own. In May, 1934 at the All-India Congress Committee meeting at Patna he himself moved the "council-entry resolution" though, earlier, he had opposed it. The rift was never serious: but it showed a weakness in the organisation (or perhaps its strength?) that it could deviate from the path he laid out for it.

Towards the end of 1920, Gandhiji promised "independence within one year" for India if the people adopted his method. It whipped up enthusiasm; it roused speculations; it raised expectations . . . but most people were disappointed as 1921 was nearing its end without the least sign of independence. They had missed the meaning. Gandhiji's independence was freedom from the sense of independence," to behave like free men and women" . . . which had been generated in 1921 and which did not depend on the grant of independence by Britain. Indian Independence was born in 1921. And, to emphasise and symbolise this, in September, 1921, Gandhiji himself adopted the loincloth as his garment which he maintained till the last day of his life. The independence that was born in 1921 grew and matured in 1947. In 1921 he advocated non-co-operation, and in the same year he accepted an invitation to see the Viceroy and explained his conduct, "We may attack measures and systems, we may not, we must not attack men. Imperfect ourselves, we must be tender towards others and be slow to impute motives." In 1947 British imperialism had left India but beloved and British Lord Mountbatten remained behind to serve as India's first Governor-General.

Early in 1922, the Congress wanted to begin with Bardoli. But when in another province, there was violence on the part of an Indian mob, he suspended the Bardoli Satyagraha. Satyagraha needed more patient preparation. Yet, Gandhiji was arrested on the 10th March, 1922. He was



Nursing a leper friend.

sentenced at "The Great Trial" to which I have already alluded, to six years' imprisonment. (But this was not to be. Two years and ten days later, Gandhiji was operated upon by an English surgeon Col. Maddock for appendicitis, and released). At the conclusion of the trial, Gandhiji said that "so far as the entire proceedings are concerned, I must say that I could not have expected greater courtesy". At the hospital, just before the operation Gandhiji dictated a statement acknowledging the courteous consideration he had received from Col. Maddock, which made the Rt. Hon. Sir V.S. Srinivasa Sastri who was present then, marvel at the "high-mindedness, forgiveness, chivalry and love transcending human nature" of Gandhiji. Another incident which took place earlier when Gandhiji was in Yeravda prison, before the operation, reveals similar spirit. There was an African co-prisoner, who was stung by a scorpion one day. Gandhiji treated the wound and sucked off the poison and attended on the patient till he was cured, though he could only talk to the patient with the universal language of signs!

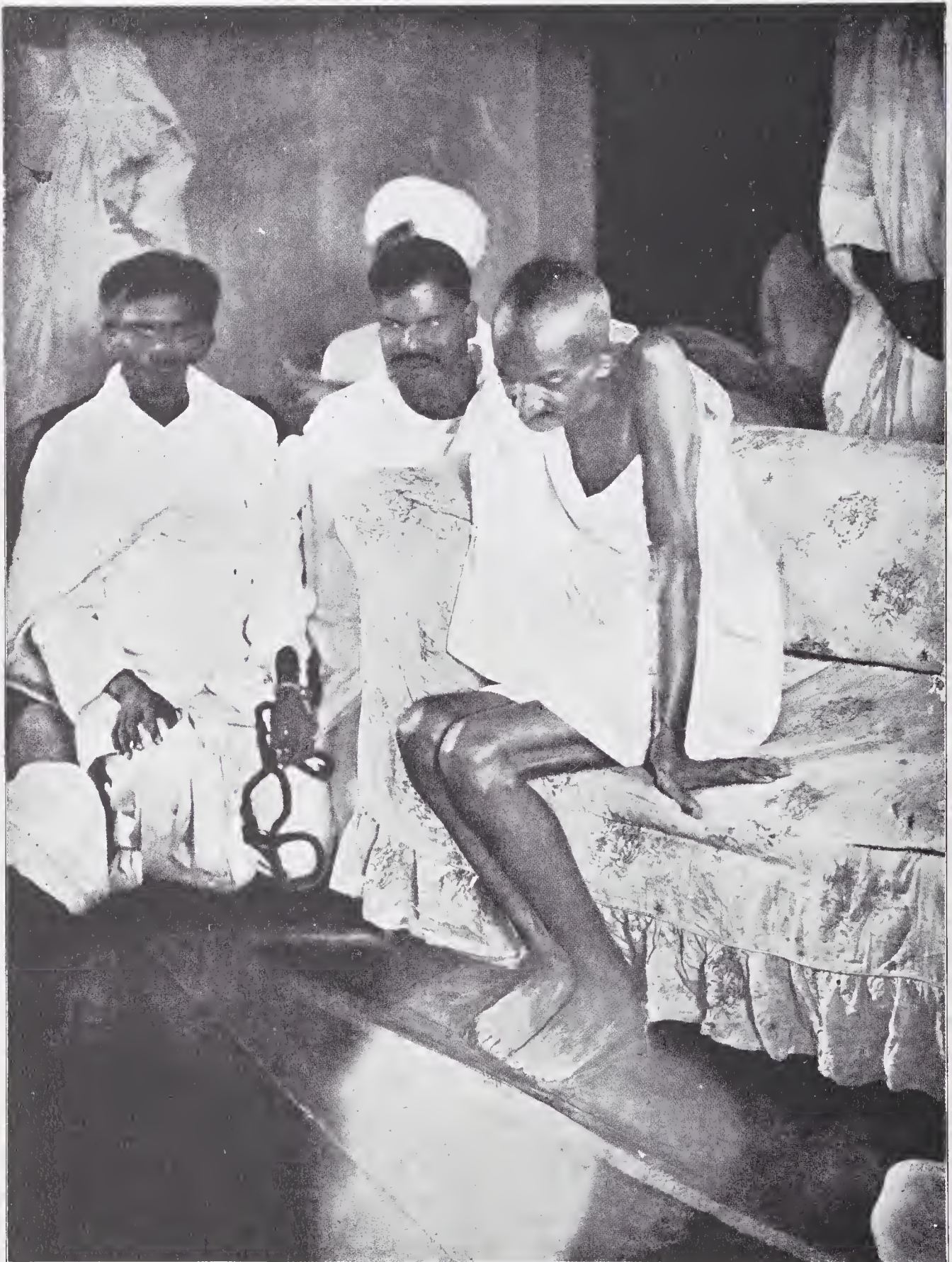
During the two years that Gandhiji was in jail, however, the non-co-operation movement had petered out, the Satyagrahis' morale was at a low ebb, and (what worried Gandhiji most) Hindu-Muslim unity on which he knew the independence of India depended, had begun to show signs of

deterioration.

He started his fast on the 18th September, 1924. He dramatised this sacred event by living in the house of Mohamed Ali. Several biographers have romanticised the effects of this historic fast. True, there was a large-scale fraternisation between Hindus and Muslims during the fast, even as there was two years earlier when the Hindus and Muslims had made common cause in connection with the Khilafat agitation.

But events have shown that, in the words of Louis Fischer, that "His twenty-one-day fast had failed. It impressed many and altered the attitude of some, but Hindu-Muslim tension continued unabated" so much so that in later years Gandhiji had to say that he had "handed the problem over to God" as 'all human efforts had failed. Gandhiji wrote on the first day of the fast: "Nothing evidently which I say or write can bring the two communities together. I am therefore imposing on myself a twenty-one-day fast from today and ending it on Wednesday October 6th. It is both a penance and a prayer . . . I respectfully invite the heads of all communities, including Englishmen, to meet and end this quarrel which is a disgrace to religion and to humanity. It seems as if God has been dethroned. Let us reinstate Him in our hearts." Alas, even these words have gone unheeded.

This was partly due to the fact that the virus



Emaciated after a twenty-one day fast for Hindu-Muslim Unity in September 1924.

of Western civilisation has altered the personality of the educated classes, the “intellectuals” of India, who were ever ready to fan the fire of communal and religious differences, to shine in the (Lime) light and to raise the mansion of their hopes on the ashes of their personal adversaries: and Gandhiji, the champion of the masses was not wholeheartedly accepted by the intellectual snobs of India. Of them he wrote: “Though they like me personally, they have a horror of my views and methods.” More than anything else, they, the “Progressive” unbanished Westerners on Indian soil, could not appreciate Gandhiji’s insistence upon spinning and khaddar, the mainstays of his constructive, rural Programme.

In 1926 Gandhiji toured the country again. Often at public meetings attended by countless peasants . . . the masses as opposed to the intellectuals . . . he would hold up his left hand as a symbol of his message. The five fingers represented the five pre-requisites of independence: abolition of untouchability, spinning, prohibition, Hindu-Muslim friendship, and equality for women. The palm where these converged was non-violence. Such a hand would take independence. These would liberate India, not violence nor British generosity. Gandhiji communicated to the masses by his mere presence. He did not have to talk.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad mentions how, often in those pre-microphone days, Gandhiji had to “Address” huge gatherings: they did not mind if they did not hear his words, they had ‘seen” his message, they had seen him. Sometimes, he would sit on the platform in silence and after a while, fold his palms in salutation and depart: like the legendary Dakshinamurthy who instructed the sages in silence Gandhiji conveyed his message by such silence, and that was “If you learn to control yourself, you will achieve independence”.

Gandhiji led a Satyagraha movement in 1920 and another Satyagraha was launched in 1930. The intervening period was utilized for non-political constructive work. To Gandhiji “Political freedom meant economic and social raising of consciousness”. B.R. Nanda suggests that the non-political activities of people like Swami Vivekananda “is a harmless drain of energy”. True, in a sense that such activity does not bring about spectacular results. True, again, if they are not translated into action in fields other than the political. On the other hand, one is left to wonder, as Nanda himself does, if all the dust raised in political marches and all the suffering endured by political martyrs are worth anything at all . . . Unless the proper spirit is passed on to future generations. Gandhiji combined political work and constructive spiritual



Thanked by the people of Bardoli in 1930 after organising the restitution of forfeited land to the previous owners.

work: one without the other is barren. As Gandhiji wrote in 1925, "For the starving men and women liberty and God are merely letters put together with out the slightest meaning; the deliverer of these unfortunate people would be one who brought them a crust of bread." He became their deliverer not only by the dramatic Dandi March but by his ceaseless constructive (and what looked like) non-political work. During the years preceding 1930 Indians were growing in the spirit of freedom though as a matter of political fact they were still subjects of imperialism. The independence born in 1921 was coming of age. But, no, not yet: not without another "Baptism with fire".

In 1928, Gandhiji launched the famous "Bardoli Satyagraha". But this time he encouraged his disciple Vallabhbhai Patel to lead it, himself watching and directing it from a distance, through his weekly Journal "Young India" in which he wrote:- "The people of Bardoli, if they are brave, will be none the worse for dispossession. They will have lost their possessions but kept what must be the dearest of all to good men and women—their honour." (The Government was confiscating their properties and even their household furniture.) Gandhiji had thus made a miniature Gandhi out of every one of the 87,000 peasants who had joined the Satyagraha. They did not flinch in the face of the worst provocation on the part of the Government; they stuck to their non-violent guns. The Government capitulated. This was the first com-

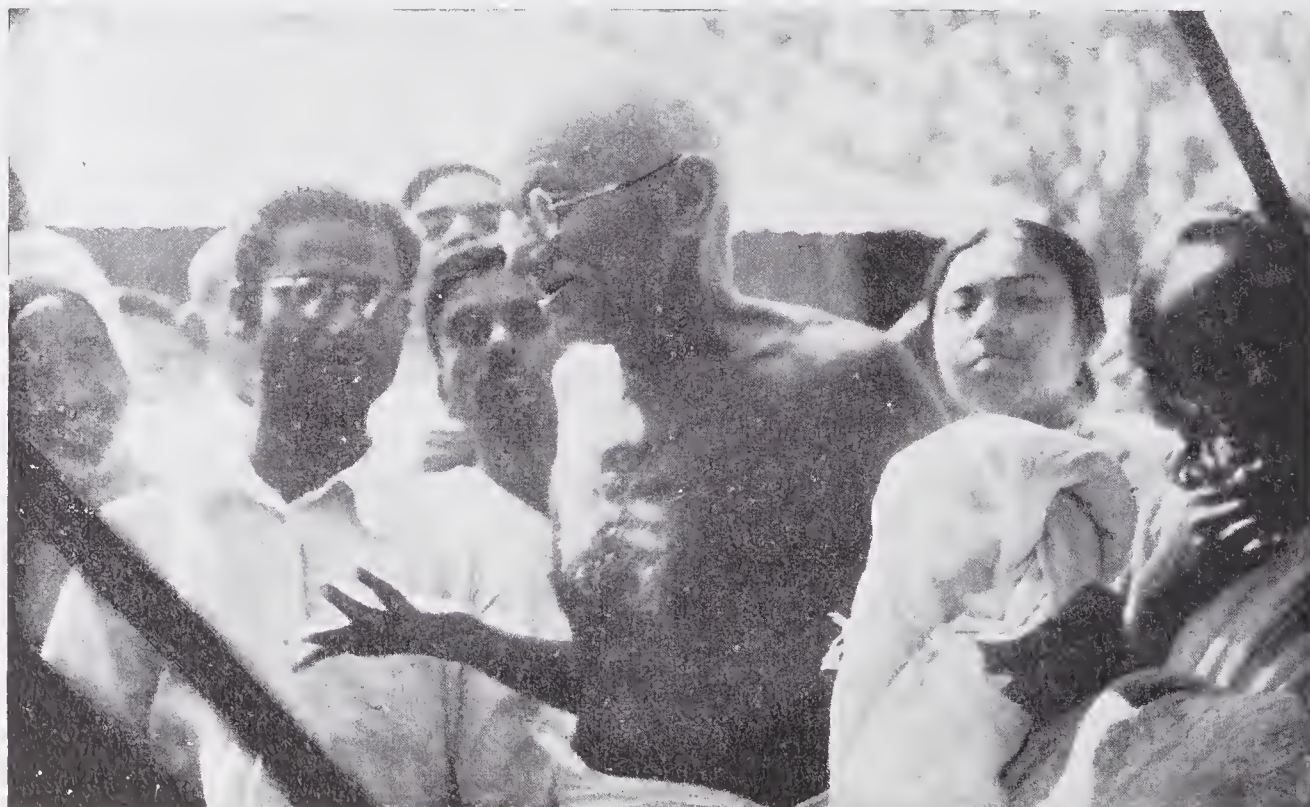
pletely successful Satyagraha in India. The salt Satyagraha was another.

In December, 1928, he agreed with the Congress that if freedom with Dominion status did not come by the end of 1929, he would thenceforth insist only on complete independence. Yet, in the middle of 1929, he was hesitant. "If India attains what will be to me so-called freedom by violent means she will cease to be the country of my pride." (Unfortunately, so it proved to be in the end.) The British Government did not yield. At the stroke of 12 midnight, on 31st December, 1929, the Congress, with Gandhiji as its leader, pledged itself to complete independence.

THE RUGGED ROAD TO FREEDOM

How was this pledge to achieve complete independence to be given effect to?

Gandhiji's eyes sought the poor man and his heart contemplated his woes. The poor peasant is the salt of the Indian Earth; and there was an imperial tax even on his salt. This had to go. This would be the cause of Satyagraha. As usual, Gandhiji wrote to the Viceroy in which, he said, inter alia: "My ambition is no less than to convert the British people through non-violence, and thus make them see the wrong they have done to India. I do not seek to harm your people. I want to serve them even as I want to serve my own . . . If the Indian people join me as I expect they will, the



Amongst the poorest of the poor.

sufferings they will undergo, unless the British nation sooner retracts its steps, will be enough to melt the stoniest hearts.” This, however, did not melt the Viceroy’s heart; and as scheduled Gandhiji began his historic Dandi march on the morning of the 12th March, 1930, after the prayer. “Our cause is strong, our means the purest, and God is with us. There is no defeat for Satyagrahis till they give up truth. I pray for the battle ...”

It is good to recall once again that Gandhiji regarded even his political struggle as a Sadhana (Spiritual practice) for which he trained himself and his co-workers, followers and disciples. The ashrams in Phoenix and Tolstoy farms in South Africa, the Sabarmati and (later) the Sewagram Ashrams in India were established because he realised that everyone who would adopt his philosophy of action had to be trained—— a principle all too soon forgotten after his death. The Sabarmati Ashram was established in 1915. In 1930 it had reached “its zenith in physical energy and moral strength” to supply volunteers for the Satyagraha.

With seventy-eight of his well trained disciples, he marched for twenty-four days and reached Dandi on the 5th April by which date the small band had swollen into an army of peace several thousand strong. On the 6th April, Gandhiji offered prayers, went to the sea and picked up some salt in defiance of the salt Laws. India’s Nobel Laureate “Nightingale” Sarojini Naidu hailed the “Deliverer”.

On the 5th May he was arrested. The secret of Gandhiji’s attitude to his mission is thus beautifully put by B.R. Nanda: “Since his arrest in early May Gandhi had been making up arrears of rent in the Yeravda gaol in Poona, which he picturesquely described as “Yeravda Mandir’ (Yeravda Temple). In prison he maintained his routine of prayer, spinning and studies, and ceased to worry about the political situation in the country and the fate of the movement he had launched. He knew he had done his duty, he hoped the people would do theirs.” That is the spirit of the Yogi of the Bhagavad Gita.

Every bit of this epoch-making event had in it the “imagination, dignity and the sense of showmanship of a great artist”. The entire nation was roused. Everywhere people defied the laws, courted suffering and imprisonment. Gandhiji’s dramatic withdrawal of the first Bardoli Satyagraha on the plea of an outbreak of violence elsewhere paid off in 1930; the people knew that he would withdraw the Satyagraha campaign if there was the least bit of violence on their part. There was none. No, not even when (after his arrest) Sarojini Naidu led another group of Satyagrahis to Dharsana Salt

works, and where at least three hundred and twenty volunteers were brutally assaulted by the police. “There was no fight, no struggle; the marchers simply walked forward till struck down,” says United Press correspondent Webb Miller who was an eye-witness. “Hour after hour stretcher-bearers carried back a stream of inert, bleeding bodies,”— blood shed in self-suffering for the liberation of India and for freeing the British from the sin of imperialism. Miller continues: “In eighteen years of reporting in twenty-two countries, I have never witnessed such harrowing scenes as at Dharsana. Sometimes the scenes were so painful that I had to turn away momentarily. One surprising feature was the discipline of volunteers. It seemed that they were thoroughly imbued with Gandhiji’s non-violent creed.”

Mahatma Gandhi who was arrested on the 5th May, 1930 was released on the 26th January, 1931, after the Viceroy’s efforts to find common ground for a conference. Gandhiji took the initiative and wrote to the Viceroy asking for an interview. He would never despair. This was what he learnt from the Bhagavad Gita: “Do your duty and keep trying.” This led to the historic Gandhi-Irwin meeting which culminated in the Magna-Carta of Indian history—the Gandhi-Irwin Pact of the 5th March, 1931 which raised Mahatmaji to the “pinnacle of popularity and prestige”; in the words of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Never mind the contents of the documents, the fact that he and the Viceroy had signed a document on equal footing revived the self-respect of every Indian.

Later that year Mahatmaji went to England as the sole Congress representative to participate in the round Table Conference, met many leading Britishers, was received by King George V, won the hearts of many Englishmen and returned to India with many achievements outside the Round Table conference but with none inside it. At Oxford Dr. Edward Thompson said of him: ‘The conviction came to me, that not since Socrates has the world seen his equal for absolute self-control and composure.’ Over the Columbia Broadcasting System, Gandhiji’s voice travelled to America, carrying his message: “. . . the world is sick unto death of blood-spilling. The world is seeking a way out and I flatter myself with the belief that perhaps it will be the privilege of the ancient land of India to show the way out to the hungry world”.

A few days after he had tea with the King-Emperor himself in London, soon after his return to India, Gandhiji was arrested on the 4th January, 1932. He went back to his Yeravda Mandir where, alone with God, he drew closer to Him. He did not encourage the authorities to give him special treatment: the money comes from the Indian treasury



Presiding over a convocation of Harijan Udyog Sabha, Industrial Institution for Untouchables at the Harijan Colony, Delhi in the year 1939.

and he did not want "to increase the burdens of my country". It is from the Yeravda Mandir that he wrote his testament on Truth, Non-violence and Continence. It was from the Yeravda Mandir that he pulled "the strings that move people's hearts" in the words of Jawaharlal Nehru when Gandhiji undertook a fast to avoid the one thing that would perpetuate the unfortunate division between the caste Hindus and the Harijans—separate electorates for them which, at the instance of a Harijan leader Dr. Ambedkar the British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald had awarded. "Such a thing would thenceforward compel them to stress their differences," Gandhiji said. How true! We first divide ourselves into camps and then go and find the differences to emphasise the reason for the division.

Dr. Ambedkar at one time preferred British rule to Hindu rule. "Age-long Hindu cruelty to his unhappy brethren filled him with anger, spite and vindictiveness." He was hard to convince when the other Hindu leaders pleaded with him to come to an agreement with Gandhiji. The heart of humanity palpitated violently as Gandhiji's terms gave Dr. Ambedkar more than he had bargained for. The British Government dropped the separate electorates (the British Prime Minister and other Cabinet Ministers had to interrupt a holiday and work over-time) and after seven days the fast was

broken.

"This was one of the first things I remember of my own early life. In a remote corner of South India the entire village would assemble every morning to hear one of our educated elders read the paper giving details of what was happening in the Yeravda prison. I do remember, too, how when the people heard that Gandhiji was fasting to end our attitude towards the untouchables, their hearts softened and their vision changed. During the fast many temples throughout India which had till then been closed to the untouchables were thrown to them, and we students were allowed to mix with them in schools.

Dr. Ambedkar's heart was touched and melted, too. He confessed at a Public meeting "that there was so much in common between him and me". He became a Minister in the Government of Free India fifteen years later, and it was he who drafted the Hindu Code Bill, deciding the fate of the Hindus, so to say.

This was one time when, during a fast, that Mahatmaji came close to death. He had fasted for longer periods earlier, and immediately after the seven-day fast for Harijans, he undertook another three-week's fast "for self-purification and to impress the ashram with the importance of service rather than indulgence" which he completed successfully outside the prison (for the Govern-

ment had released him). The seven-day fast taxed his spirit to the utmost and Gandhiji's capital was entirely of the spirit.

The three-week fast was commenced in a strange manner while he was still in prison. B.R. Nanda describes it in the following words: "As Gandhi threw himself into the (Untouchable) movement, he discovered that the evil was of a much greater magnitude than he had thought at first. The task of the reformer was stupendous. How was he to fight this age-old evil? How was he to convince his co-workers that he was in dead earnest? How was he to acquire greater application and, dedication for this great mission? Gandhiji's anguish was brought to an end by 'a call from within' to embark on a twenty-one day fast from May 8th 1933: 'I had gone to sleep the night before without the slightest idea of having to declare a fast next morning. At about twelve o'clock in the night something woke me up suddenly, and then some voice-within or without—I cannot say, whispers, "Thou must go on a fast." "How many days?" I ask. The voice again says, "Twenty-one days." "When does it begin?" I ask. It says, "You begin tomorrow." I went off to sleep after making the decision. On the first day of the fast itself he was released and he concluded it outside. Later he toured the country crusading against the curse of untouchability. "Angered by Gandhiji's crusade some persons flung an explosive bomb at him while he was on his way to a public meeting at Poona," writes Dr. Rajendra Prasad. "... violence was used against Mahatmaji at other places as well, in some of which he sustained minor injuries. But Gandhiji stood firm as a rock in his mission." His aversion to untouchability sprang from the story of Lord Rama embracing the untouchable Guha so touchingly described in the Ramayana. Rama had given him the lead, as it were, and reassured him that it had no divine sanction. In 1933, he coined a new word Harijan (the people of God) and thence forth what in official records was known as "depressed classes or scheduled castes" and in the mind of the orthodox caste Hindu as "Pariah" or "untouchable" became to Gandhiji Harijan.

Once again, Gandhiji plunged into nation-building "non-political" activities; for according to him "a parliamentary programme at all times is the least of a nation's activity. The most important and permanent work is done outside." He had his eyes on the villages all the time: "India lives in her villages, not in her cities. When I succeed in ridding the villages of their poverty, I have won Swaraj." He described the ideal village in the following words: "It is a complete republic, independent of the neighbours for its vital wants and yet interdependent for many other wants in which dependence

is a necessity. Thus every village's first concern will be to grow its own food crops and cotton for its cloth. It should have a reserve for its cattle, recreation and playground for adults and children. Then if there is more land available, it will grow useful money crops, excluding tobacco, opium and the like . . . It will have its own water works and tanks . . . Education will be compulsory up to the final basic course.

As far as possible, every activity will be conducted on a co-operative basis. He hoped for equality but not *via* violence: "Even in the most perfect world, we shall fail to avoid inequalities, but we can and must avoid strife and bitterness. There are numerous examples extant of rich and the poor living in perfect friendliness." The realist in Gandhiji was constantly struggling with the idealist. He was that a non-violent system of Government is clearly an impossibility "so long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry million persists". He advocated voluntary abdication of riches by the rich and pleaded that "The landlords cease to be mere rent collectors. They should become Trustees and trusted friends of their tenants," providing for their schools, hospital sanitation, etc. The life he advocated, he lived, for he believed that there was "no royal road for bringing about the social revolution except that we should represent it in every detail of our lives".

In 1934, he ceased to be a member of the Congress party (though even afterwards he was always its "Super-President" in the words of Jawaharlal Nehru). In 1938, already, he warned the party against power — and office-seekers. Its "quantity" was increasing and "quality" decreasing. During the early months of the World War II he even appealed to the Czechs and the Jews to offer non-violent resistance to the Nazis: But he deferred a Satyagraha campaign at home because he "thought there is non-violence enough among the masses, but there is not enough among those who have to organise the masses." It was this discrepancy that eventually led to violence all round.

Gandhiji believed that his non-violence could abolish war, and all injustices could be "fought" without recourse to violence. If non-violence demands self-sacrifice, so does a violent war, too, . . . and even more!

The second World War took the lives of more than thirty million people, wounded more than a hundred million, destroyed the properties of many more. If the people whom Hitler, Mussolini and Japan invaded had offered non-violent non-cooperation, the loss would not have been more: But at home even the Congress had not been thoroughly convinced of non-violence except for its restricted use of wrestling independence from Britain. On

every occasion when he differed from the Congress he allowed the organisation to go its own way, temporarily withdrawing from it, though he could have vetoed its decision: the veto to him was a violation of truth and non-violence. It violated the inalienable right of every human being to freedom of thought and approach to life. Gandhiji even visualised that free India would disband its army! But he quickly added that it might not materialise, "After the formation of the National Government, my voice may be a voice in the wilderness and nationalist India may go war-mad." Subsequently however, Jawaharlal Nehru was able to bring "one of the first acts of a National India Government should be to enter into a treaty with the United Nations for defensive operations against Axis powers. (This was during the World War II).

Gandhiji, the Apostle of truth and non-violence has to be carefully quoted! For him Truth was not a static object but a dynamic and progressive realisation. He did not even try to be consistent except in the absolute values, e.g., Truth, non-violence and perhaps the name of the Lord. But in their interpretation and their application, he recognised the possibility of variety. This was basic to Hinduism and he was a Hindu **par excellence**. For instance, in the matter of continence, his views soon after he himself took the vow of Brahmacharya were rigid and he would not tolerate any deviation from the rigid code even on the part of his own close associates both in the South African and the Indian Ashrams. Louis Fischer noticed that there were many women around Gandhiji who loved Gandhi and he loved them. It was a father-daughter relationship with more than usual warmth and interdependence. Miss Slade became physically ill on a number of occasions when she was separated from Bapu or when she was worried about his health. Her bond with him was one of the remarkable platonic associations of our age. He often said to her, "when this body is no more there will not be separation, but I shall be nearer you. The body is a hindrance." Rajkumari and Miss Slade would kiss his hand; he would stroke their cheeks. He said that he deliberately surrounded himself with women to prove that his mastery over 'lust' was not achieved by avoiding women. Tagore said of Gandhiji, "He condemns sexual life as inconsistent with the moral progress of man . . . his tenderness for women is one of the noblest and most consistent traits of his character and he counts among the women of his country some of his best and truest comrades in the great movement he is leading." When Acharya Kripalani wanted to marry Sucheta, he tried to dissuade her at first, but later blessed them and allowed them to marry. Hence, when it came to

the problems that face us today, it would be extremely difficult to find a guiding quotation from Gandhiji's saying and writings: one has to be a Gandhi in order to be his true follower.

Indian independence movement, born in 1921, was entering the portals of adolescence in 1942. In the beginning of August that year, Congress passed Gandhiji's "Quit India" resolution. In his last address on the 8th August, hours before he was arrested, Gandhiji told the delegates "Every-one of you should, from this very moment, consider himself a free man or woman and even act as if you are free and no longer under the heel of this imperialism." He was imprisoned, this time in the Aga Khan palace at Yeravda: and all the "free men and women" were quickly placed behind bars. The leaderless country broke into violence: and Gandhiji was not free to soothe them. The Government accused him for this violence. It was untrue. He had to vindicate the Truth. As "an appeal to the highest Tribunal for Justice" (as he wrote to the Viceroy) Gandhiji began to fast for twenty-one days again. He refused to be released for the duration of the fast, and thus allowed the fast to falsely appear as a ruse to gain release.

Even greater trials awaited the Mahatma in the jail. A heart-attack took away Mahadev Desai who was his secretary for twenty-four years. Gandhiji was shaken by the loss. Every day he made a pilgrimage to the spot where Mahadev's ashes were buried. This was not all. Some time later, Kasturbai died. Gandhiji himself said: "Her passing has left a vacuum which will never be filled. We lived together for sixty-two years . . . And she passed away in my lap". He wrote to the Viceroy in reply to the latter's condolence message: 'We were a couple outside the ordinary.' After Gandhiji took the vow of celibacy at the age of thirty-seven "We ceased to be two different entities . . . she became truly my better half."

On the 6th May, 1944, Gandhiji was released from the prison after his last term there, three years before Independence and four years before he died—after having spent a total of 2089 days in Indian and 249 days in South African prisons, during the best period of his life.

Outside the walls of the Aga Khan palace Gandhiji faced another more impenetrable wall: that which separated him from Jinnah, the Muslim League leader, who declared that the Muslims "are a nation with our own distinctive culture and civilisation, language and literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclature, sense of value and proportion, legal laws and moral codes, customs and calendar, history and traditions, aptitudes and ambitions." Gandhiji confessed, "I



Offering solace and consolation to a grief-stricken woman of Noakhali

find no parallel in the history for a body of converts and their descendants claiming to be a nation apart from the parent stock." Gandhiji went to see the Muslim leader in his own house to iron out the differences. But the talks ended in a deadlock.

While Jinnah was asserting that Hindus and Muslims were two different nations, Gandhiji was preaching "India's nationalism spells internationalism" in a statement on the eve of the birth of the United Nations Organisation. "Freedom of India will demonstrate to all the exploited races of the earth that their freedom is near and that in no case will they henceforth be exploited," he said. To such a mind and such a heart, the dissection of India into two nations was worse than death.

THE FATAL FREEDOM

In 1945-46 it looked as though Freedom was coming closer, but India was moving farther away from Gandhiji. There were ceaseless negotiations between the Government and the Congress, between the Congress and the Muslim League. The British Cabinet Mission's proposals for Transfer of power from Britain to India had been accepted in part by the Congress. The Viceroy succeeded in persuading Jawaharlal Nehru to form the first all-Indian coalition Government. On September 2nd 1946, Nehru became the Prime Minister of India, and Gandhiji "felt grateful to the British but in no mood for jubilation." He reminded the people that evening that the Muslims were the brothers of the Hindus. Jinnah had declared 16th August as "Direction Action Day" and riots broke out in Bengal. Gandhiji pleaded that "a brother does not return anger with anger." But, standing at the threshold of freedom which seemed inevitable and not dependent on Gandhiji's leadership or help, neither the Hindus nor the Muslims were in a mood to listen to the Mahatma. There were widespread riots in East Bengal (Noakhali), "... the cry of outraged womanhood ... has peremptorily called me to Noakhali," said Mahatmaji and went to Bengal. While he was there riots broke out in Bihar. "Let not Bihar, which has done so much to raise the prestige of the Congress, be the first to dig its grave," he appealed. Being a Hindu he was sterner towards fellow Hindus than towards Muslims, which Hindus misunderstood and resented. He asked the East Bengal Hindus to be brave: he set himself up as the exemplar by living and moving in riot-infested areas. He philosophised with them, "supposing someone killed me, you will gain nothing by killing someone in retaliation. And if you think over it, who can kill Gandhiji except Gandhiji himself? No one can destroy the soul". Violence and untruth alone destroyed the inner soul, in a

manner of speaking. He knew he was playing with fire. "My present mission (in Noakhali) is the most difficult and complicated one of my life; ... I am prepared for any eventuality. "Do or die" has to be put to the test here. "Do" here means Hindus and Mussulmans should learn to live together in peace and amity. Otherwise, I should die in the attempt." He was deeply distressed. In inner anguish and agony, he cried, "There is a terrible mutual distrust. Oldest friendships have snapped. Truth and Ahimsa, by which I swear and which have, to my knowledge, sustained me for sixty years, seem to fail to show the attributes I have ascribed to them."

In East Bengal he walked barefoot; for he treated his tour as a pilgrimage of penance. He covered forty-nine villages in four months. He took the blame for the riots upon himself, he had "failed to cure the people by non-violence." He was making one last desperate attempt. "I have only one object in view," he said, "and it is a clear one; namely that God should purify the hearts of Hindus and Muslims and the two communities should be free from suspicion and fear of one another. Please join with me in this prayer and say that God is the Lord of us both and that He may give us success." He did not believe that the diversity of religions should be abolished in favour of one religion: "A tree has a million leaves. There are as many religions as there are men and women, but they are all rooted in God."

From Bengal to Bihar, the scene of Hindu violence, Wherever he went he collected money for the relief of the wronged Muslims. "He insisted that Hindus should call back the Muslims who had fled and rebuild their huts and re-establish them in business." His "message of love" irritated even some devout Hindus: hatred and anger had blunted their intelligence and robbed them of sanity.

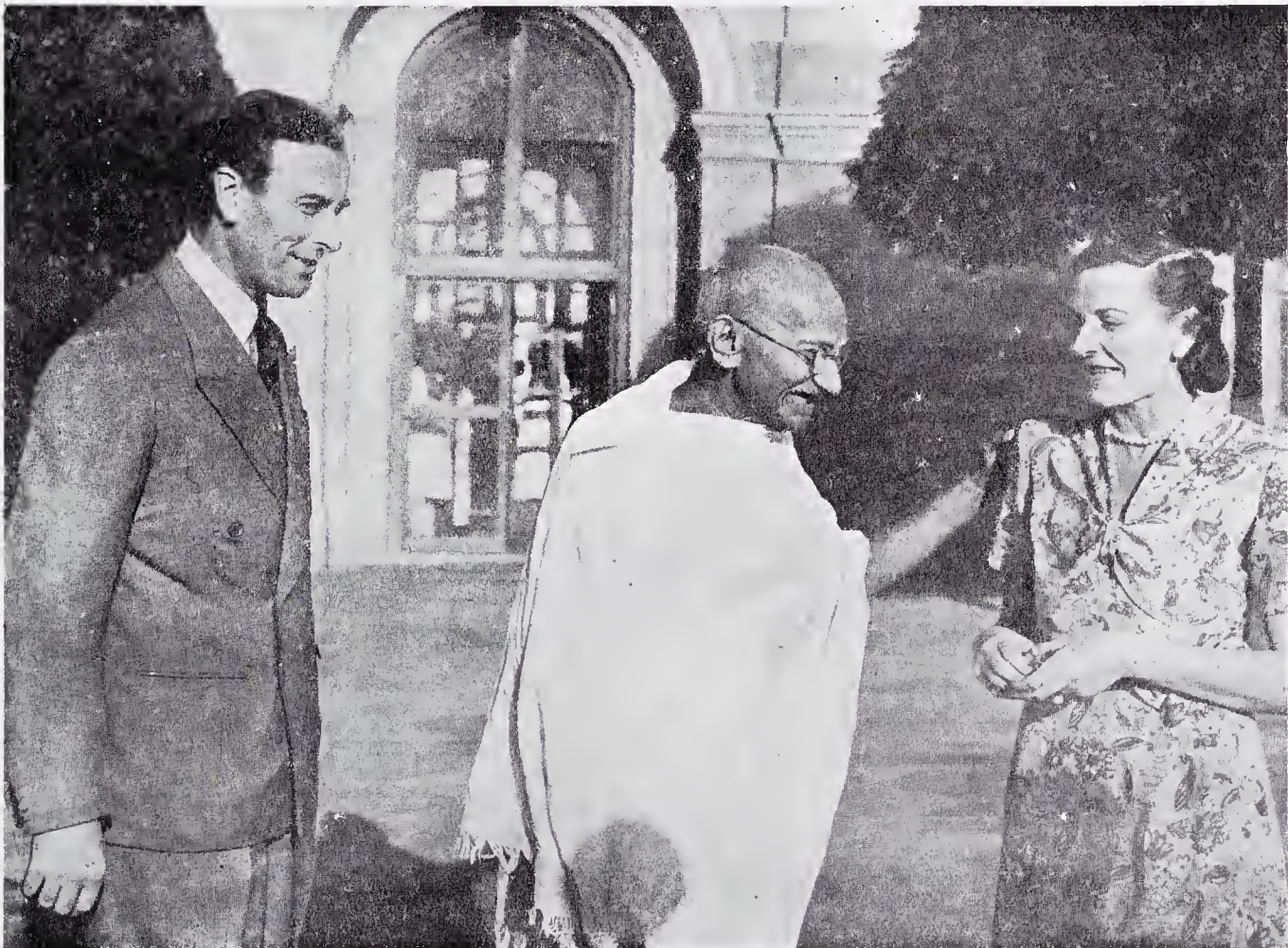
Lord Mountbatten had become the Viceroy of India in March, 1947. Very soon after this he and the leaders of the Congress party had arrived at the conclusion that Partition could not be avoided. To Gandhiji, division of India was an absolute evil. He regarded India not as a piece of earth but as a Goddess, a mother. He did not want her to be cut to pieces. Yet, in the face of riots and the threat of civil war, he knew there was no alternative, unless he was able to persuade the Hindus to show "the spirit of brotherliness" which, he said, "would be good for Bihar, the India and the world." He even rationalised the riots. "We have not lived and toiled all these years that we should become barbarians as we appear to be becoming, looking at all the senseless bloodshed in Bengal, Bihar and the Punjab. But I feel that it is just an indication that, as we are throwing off the

foreign yoke, all the dirt and froth is coming to the surface."

The Mountbatten Plan for the Partition of India became public in June, 1947 and the Congress accepted it, thus in effect rejecting Gandhiji. Congress President Kripalani explained the Congress stand against Gandhiji. "He (Gandhiji) has as yet found no way of tackling the problem (non-violence, peace and brotherhood) on a mass basis." To which Gandhiji could have replied, "The masses follow the leaders who have failed to follow their leader (Gandhi)." The Mahatma, the man-of-God, is essentially a "Seer," a visionary. He is an adventurer in the realm spiritual, one who explores unknown continents and at the best plants a flag. It is for those who come after him to enter into treaties, rule and administer the country. It is no doubt true that Gandhiji was an adventurer and his vision often made him err on the side of over-optimism away from realism and under-rate the magnitude of the problem of latent evil. He declared his vision. He gave his message. It is for the followers of the prophet to suggest ways and means of enlarging the field of the application of his message. The message of the Buddha, the

message of Jesus, and the message of Gandhiji are indeed meant only for the elect few; yet these few are elected from the masses who, too, need the life-transforming message so that they may in course of time qualify for such election.

To Gandhiji partition was a spiritual tragedy. "Thirty-two years of work have come to an inglorious end," said he. "On August 15th, 1947, India would become independent. But the victory was cold, political arrangement: Indians would sit where Englishmen had sat; a tricolour would wave in place of the Union Jack. It was victory with tragedy, victory that found the army defeating its own general," wrote Louis Fischer. Gandhiji did not participate in the independence celebrations in Delhi; he was in Calcutta and he spent the day fasting and in prayer. He was stricken with remorse: "I deceived myself into the belief that people were wedded to non-violence." Poet Tagore had predicted this years earlier: "Perhaps he will not succeed. Perhaps he will fail as the Buddha failed and as Christ failed to wean men from their iniquities, but he will always be remembered as one who made his life a lesson for all ages to come." Like the Buddha and Jesus, Gandhi dwells in the



With his friends the Earl and Countess Mountbatten on March, 31st 1947.

hearts of millions today, no longer hindered by the physical body. Gandhiji's statues standing in every major city in the world will symbolise the power and the Truth of non-violence. What is happening today in Ladysmith is but a beginning in this direction. A great Buddhist said about Buddhism that it began with Buddha's enlightenment and ended with man's enlightenment. The only meaning of Gandhiji's mission and message, life and death, is to lead every man along the path he trod and thus to become Gandhi. Men like Gandhiji are not of the generation in which they are born: they are the angels of the dawn—the light is seen long after they have been removed from the scene.

Political freedom for India was Gandhiji's aim. To promote the spirit of non-violence, of truth and harmony between thoughts, words and deeds among the people of the world—that was his aim. He took not much notice of the political freedom of India, but continued his work. By the 14th of August the situation seemed to have reached to normal in Calcutta. But on the 31st of August, Gandhiji himself was attacked by some Muslims, one of whom had allegedly been stabbed by a Hindu. Gandhiji narrowly escaped being injured. On the 1st September Gandhiji decided to fast: "What my word in person cannot do, my fast may. It may touch the hearts of all the warring factions in the Punjab, and Calcutta." He would not give up for to him unity was truth. On the 4th September all the leaders of Calcutta gathered round the Mahatma and gave him a written pledge that they would keep the peace. Gandhiji broke the fast and on the 7th September went to Delhi.

Delhi had transformed itself into a huge refugee camp to accommodate the thousands of Hindus pouring into India from what was the newly-created Pakistan. Every day there were clashes, minor and major, between Hindus and Muslims. "In this city of the dead and the mad, Mahatma Gandhi tried to spread the gospel of love and peace." He urged the Muslims to remain in Delhi in spite of heavy odds, as he had urged Hindus to remain in East Bengal. He warned Hindu extremists that by thus fighting and killing Muslims they were destroying Hinduism. "If Pakistan was maltreating Hindus there was no justification for their maltreating Muslims. There is no gain in returning evil for evil," said he pragmatically. But on his own birthday in 1947, he sorrowfully admitted that "There is nothing but anguish in my heart. Time was when whatever I said the masses followed. Today, mine is a lone voice. I have lost all desire to live long. I cannot live while hatred and killing mar the atmosphere." (At one time he had expressed the wish to live till he was 125

years, in order to serve the people of India and through them, the world).

It is not his attitude to success that reveals a Mahatma, but how he accepted failure. Gandhiji's close associates often deserted him. The people for whose welfare he fought and sacrificed his health and his life turned against him. The country for which he lived and died was divided. Was Gandhiji a success or a failure? Unqualified success, in spite of the seeming failure. But success as a living exemplar of the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita. Because he was firm in his duty whether that brought him success or failure, honour or dishonour, pleasure or pain.

The feeling was gaining ground among the extremist Hindus that Gandhiji's own stand was different: he was strict and severe with himself and his own. "I can serve you best," he told the Hindus on the 12th November, 1947, "by drawing attention to your shortcomings. That has been my life's motto, for therein lies true friendship and my service is not only to you or to India; it extends to the world, for I know no barriers of race or creed. If you can get rid of your failings, you will benefit not only yourself but the whole of India."

He was preaching to deaf ears. More disillusionment followed. This time it was closer at hand, among Gandhiji's immediate followers. He discovered that the ruling section of the Congress had no effective opposition. Gandhiji wanted a Socialist to be the Congress President, to succeed Kripalani who had (with Gandhiji's approval) resigned, because the Government "ignored the party . . . from which it derives its power." He nominated Narendra Dev. Nehru supported him. Others opposed it. They chose Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Gandhiji dissuaded him. Others persuaded him to charge his mind. He became the new Congress President. Gandhiji had been defeated by the Congress. His own had turned against him.

Gandhiji now turned to the heads of the various social service institutions which he had established. He wanted them to combine, without entering into power politics. "By abjuring power and devoting ourselves to pure, selfless service of the voters we can guide and influence them. It would give us far more real power than we shall have by going into the Government." He told a conference of Constructive Workers that "Congressmen aren't sufficiently interested in constructive work. We must recognise the fact that the social order of our dreams cannot come through the Congress party of today . . ." It takes tremendous inner spiritual strength to say this. "There is so much corruption today that it frightens me .

Everybody wants to carry so many votes in his pocket, because votes give power . . . Banish the idea of the capture of power and you will be able to guide power and keep it on the right path . . . There is no other way of removing the corruption that threatens to strangle our independence at its very birth". But they that needed to hear were deaf.

Gandhiji moved in the realm of Satyam or Truth of God; hence he was above party politics and power politics. He could boldly say what he felt without fear or favour. He thus justified India's action in sending troops to Kashmir. He regretted that Nehru had taken the Kashmir question to the United Nations (which he had blessed earlier) because "at the U.N. considerations of international power politics rather than merit would determine the attitude of countries towards the Kashmir issue."

One last attempt. He was in Delhi in January, 1948. The communal situation was better. But Gandhiji could "sense" suppressed anger in the hearts of the people. A minor incident would in a flash lead to major conflict. On the 13th January, he commenced his last fast. "I expect a thorough cleansing of hearts," he said. He revealed that as a child he had dreamt of harmony among the followers of different religions. "In the evening of my life, I shall jump like a child to feel that the dream has been fulfilled." During the fast, he wrote to the Government of India that it should send Pakistan its share of the assets of pre-partition India. It was done at once. On the 17th January he assured the dignitaries who were growing anxious on his account: "I never feel so happy as when I am fasting for the spirit. This fast has brought me greater happiness than hitherto. No one need disturb this happy state unless he can honestly claim that in his journey he has turned deliberately from satan towards God." On the morning of the 18th, a hundred representatives of

all the parties and sections of the public signed the peace pledge. "We take the pledge that we shall protect the life, property and faith of the Muslims and that the incidents which have taken place in Delhi will not happen again." Gandhiji broke the fast. He told them: "If you cannot make the whole of India realise that the Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims are all brothers, it will bode ill for the future of both Dominions. What will happen to India if they both quarrel? A question which is still stirring in the hearts of millions of Indians. Gandhiji, as he uttered these words, was overcome with emotion; tears streamed down his hollow cheeks. It touched the hearts of all those who witnessed this scene. Sir Mohammed Zafrulla Khan, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, told the U.N. Security Council that "a new and tremendous wave of feeling and desire for friendship between the Two Dominions is sweeping the sub-continent in response to the fast."

But, Alas! . . . Within a fortnight, Mahatma Gandhi, the apostle of Peace and Love, the voice of Truth and Non-violence fell the victim of a Hindu extremist's bullet. A few days earlier, another young Hindu had tried to kill Gandhiji with a hand-made bomb. Gandhiji was unhurt and he asked the Police not to proceed against him but "pity him" But, Nathuram Vinayak Godse did not want to take chances. He mingled with the crowd at the prayer meeting of Gandhiji. On the 30th of January, 1948, Gandhiji was, unusually, a few minutes late. As he walked towards his seat at the meeting, people bowed to him. He bowed to them. Nathuram Godse bowed too, but quickly fired three shots at point-blank range. The Mahatma who had folded his palms in salutation, fell with "hey Ram" on his lips. He saw in front of him, not the murderer nor the public, but the Omnipresent Lord.

The drop slipped into the ocean.

MAHATMA GANDHI KI JAI
OM TAT SAT...OM SHANTI

"A Great South African"

—General Smuts



1893 — 1914

Mohandas Karmachand Gandhi

Chief Events of his South African Career:

Born Porbandar, Oct 2, 1869
Called to the Bar 1893
Arrived at Durban, Natal, 1893
Admitted as an Advocate,
Natal Supreme Court .. 1893
(Natal Law Society's objection failed).
Founded the Natal Indian
Congress 1894
Returned to India 1895
Came back to South Africa:
Hostile European demonstration at the Point,
Durban, Jan. 13 1897
Formed Ambulance Corps
in the Anglo-Boer War
—Sergeant-Major Gandhi 1899
Sailed for India 1901
Returned to South Africa .. 1902
(Third visit).
Presented Memorial to late
Joseph Chamberlain, Secty.
of State for the Colonies .. 1902

"SOUTH AFRICA has produced some great men, and Gandhi is one of them. He is also one of the great men of the world"

—said General Smuts
in an interview, in Durban, in
May 1933, at the time of Mahatma Gandhi's fast of 21 days.

Started Law Practice in
Johannesburg 1902
Founded Transvaal British
Indian Association 1903
Organised Relief Work:
Outbreak of plague in
Johannesburg 1904
Started *The Indian Opinion* .. 1904
Established The Phoenix
Settlement 1904
Deputation to Lord Selbourne 1905

Led Ambulance Corps in
Natal Native Rebellion .. 1906
Took the Oath of Passive
Resistance against Anti-
Asiatic Laws 1906
Emigration Act received
Royal assent 1907
Addressed Mass Meeting of
Protest at Johannesburg—
Imprisonment 1908
Advocate of Registration:
Subsequent assault by mob 1908
Deputation to Lord Elgin
on Indian Trading rights
and other grievances .. 1908
Second Deputation to
Colonial Office 1912
Invited G. K. Gokhale to
South Africa 1912
Revival of Passive Resistance
against £3 tax—
Imprisonment 1913
Gandhi-Smuts Agreement .. 1913
Passing of The Indian Relief
Act 1914
Sailed for London: Close of
South African career July, 1914

aum

BAPUJI'S FAVOURITE HYMN

1

Lo! Him we may call the man of the Lord Omnipresent (1) who experiences in himself the pain that another feels; who renders service to soothe another's distress; who does not import into his mental texture pride of ego or of deed.

2

Who venerates each one in every world; who speaks ill of none; whose speech, whose senses and whose mind are kept under firm discipline—blessed, blessed is the mother who gave birth to him. Him we may call a Vaishnava.

3

Whose sight is equisual; (2) whose ambitions have been abandoned; to whom all women not linked with him in marriage are as mother; whose tongue slips not to utter untruth; whose hand does not stretch forth to touch what is not his own. Him we may call a Vaishnava.

4

He does not fall prey to delusion; he is not overwhelmed by material lures; his mind is incapable of attachment to things of this world; he is engrossed in his love for the name of the blissful (3) Lord; his person is so cleansed and pure that in it are concentrated all the sanctifying places of pilgrimage of this earth. Him we may call a Vaishnava.

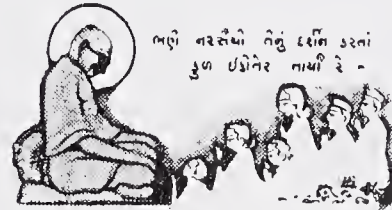
5

He cherishes no desires; he knows no tortuous ways; he has cast off all wishful longings, also resentment and indignation. Saya Narsaiyo, (4) seventy-one generations of ancestors pass on to Paradise on one's attaining a glimpse of such a one whom we may call a Vaishnava.

NARASIMHA MEHTA



વૈષ્ણવજન તો તેને કહીએ જે પીડ પરાર્થ જાણે રે;
પરદુઃખે ઉપકાર કરે તો એ મન અભિમાન ન આણે રે.
સકળ લોકમાં સહુને વંદે નિંદા ન કરે કેની રે;
યાય કાજ મન નિશ્ચય રાખે ધન ધન જનની તેની રે.
સમદ્રષ્ટિ ને તૃપ્ત્યાત્યાગી પરસ્ત્રી જેને માત રે;
જિહ્વા થકી અસત્ય ન બોલે પરધન નવ જાણે હાથ રે.
મોહ માયા વ્યાપે નહિ જેને દૃઢ વૈરાગ્ય જેના મનમાં રે;
રામનામ શું તાળી લાગી સકળ તીરથ તેના તનમાં રે.
વજ્રોભી ને કપટરહિત છે કામ ક્રોધ નિવાર્યાં રે;
ભણે નરસૈયો તેનું દરશન કરતાં કુળ એકોતેર તાર્યાં રે.



1. Vishnu, from Sanskrit Vish to enter through and through
2. Samadrishti
3. Rama from Sanskrit Ram to please, to give bliss
4. Narasimha in its diminutive, humble form

Sanathan Dharma Sabha



LADIES' SATSANGH

STANDING BACK ROW: Miss. R. Motheeram, Mrs Motilal Riga, Mrs L. Jagwanth, Mrs R. Kallideen, Miss R. Maharaj, Mrs H. R. Maharajh, Mrs Ramphal, Mrs, I. J. Maharaj, Mrs B. I. Sarjoo.
CENTRE ROW: Miss N. B. Chedie, Mrs R. T. Riga, Mrs Mohan Riga, Mrs H. L. Maharaj, Mrs J. R. Singh, Mrs C. N. Naran, Mrs R. Harri, Mrs B. Harri, Mrs B Parag, Mrs, Mrs B. Sooknundhan, Mrs S. Ramkelawan, Mrs S. Jodha.
SEATED: Mrs B. Chedie, Mrs Ramparsadh, Mrs K. R. Singh, Mrs H. R. Singh, Mrs T. Riga, Mrs N. Naran Mrs Mahadev, Mrs Somai, Mrs S. L. Maharaj, Mrs B. Jankie.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

SEATED: S. Jodha, A. Harribhai, (Trustee), B. Harri (Secretary), R. T. Riga (President), J. R. Singh, (Vice-President), B. Parag, S. Ramkelawan.
STANDING CENTRE ROW: R. Harri, B. Sooknundhan, Mohan Riga, D. Bhagwanth, S. Thulsie, (Treasurer)
STANDING BACK ROW: S. Ramparsadh (Asst. Secretary), H. L. Maharaj, I. J. Maharaj (Asst. Treasurer).

An Historical Review of the

Sanathan Dharma Sabha

Ladysmith, Natal

By B. Hari, Secretary Sanathan Dharma Sabha
Secretary/Treasurer Mahatma Gandhi Statue and Bursary Trust

THIS VOLUME to commemorate the Birth Centenary of Mahatma Gandhi will be incomplete without some reference to the Sanathan Dharma Sabha.

The publication of the volume to mark the 100th birthday of the Mahatma; the unveiling of the statue erected in his honour in the garden of the Sanathan Dharma Sabha; and the official opening of the Mahatma Gandhi House are special features of the Centenary commemorative programme of the Sanathan Dharma Sabha, Ladysmith, Natal.

Therefore, in what follows, an attempt is made to record the various efforts of the Sanathan

Dharma Sabha to promote the cause of religion and culture among the Hindus of Ladysmith and of South Africa during its 74 years of existence.

The early Indian settlers in this country were mostly Hindus. Some settled on the coast to work on the sugar cane plantations; others settled in Northern Natal, in places like Ladysmith and its adjoining districts Elandslaagte and Wesselsnek as coal miners and railway workers.

In the year 1898, these pioneers felt the need for establishing a religious institution for public worship and religious instructions for the Sanathanist of the area.

COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERS



COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERS

STANDING BACK ROW: S. Ramparsadh, I. J. Maharaj, Motilal Riga, H. L. Maharaj, P. B. Huri, R. Harri, K. Asaram, R. Kallideen

STANDING CENTRE ROW: H. R. Maharaj, B. Sooknundhan, B. Harri, S. Thulsie, Mohan Riga, C. N. Naran, G. Motheeram, D. Bhagwanth, B. I. Sarjoo.

SEATED: S. Ramkelawan S. Jodha, B. Ramcharan, J. R. Singh, H. R. Singh, R. T. Riga, R. Motheeram A. Haribhai, B. Jankie, B. Parag.



TYPICAL WEEKEND SATSANG GROUP – 1922
 (Left to Right): (Unknown), M. Mungal, Babu Debi Singh, T. Churran, L. Singh, S. Hutheram, O. R. Singh, R. Singh, L. Sewgoolam, G. Bachoo, M. Choudree, (Treasurer), Baboo Bajrangh Singh.
 Sitting: G. Hutheram, S. Hutheram, H. Hirjee, M. Aheer D. Kaloo, M. Mahabeer, M. Kaloo.

With this idea in view, weekend prayer meetings, satsangs or gatherings for the purpose of holding discourses on religious subjects and

singing of bhajans were a regular feature. These satsangs were held at private homes, in improvised pandals at Railway barracks and mine compounds.

In a few years devoted people were sufficiently organised to form into Sabhas to promote and protest their common religious interests.

In the year 1902, the Sanathan Dharma Sabha was inaugurated. Its chief aim was to promote religious, social, cultural and educational activities in Ladysmith.



Old Temple:- Centre of relief work during Satyagraha struggle

— Sanathan Dharma Sabha —

Officials 1939



STANDING: S. Jodha, L. Haribhai, A. Sarjoo (Jt. Hon. Secretary), A. Haribhai, K. R. Singh (Jt. Hon. Secretary), B. Parag, K. Surran, M. Ramdhial, S. Gunpath, B. Chedie, Harriparsadh.

SITTING: R. Assaram, H. R. Singh (Vice-President and Treasurer), H. Valjee, T. Riga (President), B. Ramchuran, R. Mathadeen

At that time the community was very poor and at a tremendous sacrifice they acquired a property consisting of an old dwelling house on a $\frac{3}{4}$ acre site at 103 Forbes Street. The dwelling house was converted into a place of worship and used as such for almost 60 years.

The first list of members comprised mainly of Hindi immigrants and their descendents. According to the deed of Trust executed on the 28th May 1905, the first Trustees of the Sabha were Messrs. Moonoo Maharaj; Baldeo Maharaj, Rajkumar Singh, Mandraj Singh and Haribhai Hirjee. The officials were: President, Shri Baldeo Maharaj; Vice-President, Shri Rajkumar Singh; Secretary, Shri Roopsingh; Treasurer, Shri Haribhai Hirjee; Committee Members: Messrs. Kather-nath Maharaj, Sewbalak Maharaj, Nagasar Singh, Debee Singh, Gooljeri Lalla, C. Hemunchul, Hutherman, C. Jewon, Mathadeen, Mathura, B. B. Mathoo, Bajrang Maharaj, Bhagaloo and Sun Singh.

Since its inception, concerted efforts were made to extend the limited facilities by erecting a Temple and Hall. One such effort resulted in the erection of a circular foundation 5 feet high and almost 700 square feet in area with blue granite stone. It was abandoned at foundation level because of financial difficulties. Nevertheless a large Havan Kundh was built in the centre of it and many open-air religious ceremonies were performed with the congregation seated around the Kundh.

With the control of the activities of the Sabha passing on to younger members, a concerted effort was made to erect a modern structure to serve the needs of the Hindu community of Ladysmith. At a Shree Sathnarain Katha ceremony held on the 19th February 1939, a resolution to erect a new Temple was renewed.

Some very successful fund-raising drives were undertaken by its members throughout Natal, Transvaal and Cape Province. Although much activities were recorded during this period, no concrete move was made to build the Temple.



Hindi School Students

The religious activities of the Sabha included not only the celebrations of festivals and holding of prayer satsangs but aimed at bringing the congregation in contact with Saints and great Spiritual leaders from abroad.

On the 4th December, 1935, Swami Adhyandjee of the Ramakrishna Mission of India was invited to Ladysmith under the auspices of the Sabha. In recent years Swami Venketesananda, His Holiness Swami Chidananda of the Divine Life Society, Rishikesh, India, and Swami Nishreyasananda of Ramakrishna Mission India, delivered lectures and sermons at the Sabha.

Hindi education was conducted at the Temple almost since its inception with periods of break in between owing to financial difficulties and shortage of teachers from time to time. Initiated by the Sanathan Dharma Sabha and with the co-operation of the Hindi Yuvak Sabha, a Society known as the "Ladysmith Hindi Shiksha Sabha" came into existence in 1968, to propagate the Hindi language and literature.

The erection of a new Temple to serve the expanding needs of the community remained a dream until 4th January 1959, when the first concrete was poured into the foundation. At a later ceremony the foundation stone was laid by the Trustee Shri Haribhai Hirjee on 25th October, 1959.



Laying of Foundation Stone by Late H. Hirjee

Since then, with ever-increasing vigour and united effort, a number of fund-raising activities was launched. Successful plays and variety concerts were staged by the pupils of the Hindi school and by members of the Sabha, ably assisted by the Prakash Orchestra. Donation lists and bazaars were organised by the ever-enthusiastic Ladies' group; Extensive collection drives were undertaken throughout the Republic by the members of the Sabha.

After many years of hard work a magnificent edifice consisting of a Shrine and Hall dedicated to Lord Vishnu has been erected at a cost of R50,000.

The congregation hall to accommodate one thousand (1000) persons is attached to the Temple. It is designed to serve a dual purpose; for religious services in the Shrine and for the holding of cultural activities on the large stage.

The Shrine has the Moorthies of Lord Vishnu and his Avatars, suitably mounted on pedestals. The Moorthies in the Shrine have been donated.

Attached to the building is a library which is named after the donor Shri V. S. Pather of Johannesburg. Suitable religious, social and cultural literature books are now kept on its shelves.

The Temple entrance and gates are a fitting memorial to the Lodhia family of Durban. The entire cost of this beautiful structure was borne by them.

The official opening of the Temple and Shrine was held on the 7th February 1965. Babu S. Roopsingh of Shakaskraal was honoured to open the hall on behalf of the Roopsingh Family Religious and Educational Trust.

The Moorthies in the Shrine were consecrated on the same day under the Divine Blessing of Swami Venkatesananda who was joined by a panel of Pundits, namely; Lalla Maharaj, Tulsiram, S. Panday, B. R. Maharaj, S. Lalla Maharaj, Ramnarain Dube and U. M. Jokhaker.

It was at a symposium held in 1960 to commemorate the Centenary of the Indian settlement in Natal, that Dr. Edgar Brookes, Professor of History at the University of Natal, drew the attention of the gathering to the association of Mahatma Gandhi with Ladysmith. Mention was also made of Gandhiji's service as a stretcher-bearer in the Ambulance Corps in Ladysmith and Spionkop during the Anglo-Boer War.

The Sabha immediately took up the challenge to mark the site of the old Temple with a suitable memorial to Gandhi. After the idea was

conceived the Mahatma Gandhi Statue Committee was formed in 1961. The members now serving on this Committee are: Messrs. R. M. Lodhia (Chairman), B. Hari (Secretary/Treasurer), R. T. Riga (President S. D. S.), J. R. Singh, A. Haribhai, R. Kallideen and S. Ramkelawan.

After all formalities both from the Governments of South Africa and India to import a statue of the Mahatma were finalised, an extensive drive for funds was made by the Statue Committee. Their target was to find two hundred sponsors representing various towns in the Republic. This task has now been successfully accomplished, and the names and biographies of the sponsors appear in this volume. The names of the sponsors are inscribed on a plaque which stands in the gardens of the Vishnu Temple, Ladysmith.



LORD VISHNU
Late Babu Ramchuran Singh at Prayer



MAHATMA GANDHI STATUE SUB-COMMITTEE – BOMBAY

From Left to Right:- Mr. Bhagwandas Ramlal, Mr. Madhavbhai Patel, Mr. R. M. Lodhia, Miss Roshen Billimoria, Mr. Jamnadas Motiram, Mr. Shantilal J. Mehta, Mr. Ratilal B. Patel



Shri Ramdas M. Lodhia with the Late Prime Minister of India, Lal Bahadur Shastri

Shri R.M. Lodhia made a special trip to India in 1965 to supervise the designing of the statue, and arranged for its shipment to South Africa on behalf of the Sanathan Dharma Sabha. He formed a Sub-Committee known as the "Mahatma Gandhi Statue Committee (India)", to assist him. The Committee consisted of: Shri R. M. Lodhia (Chairman), Shrimati Roshan Billimoria (Secretary), Messrs Bhagwandas Ramlal, Jumnadas Motiram, Shanti J. Metha (formerly of Durban), Rathilal Patel, and Madhubhai Patel, one of the leading sculptors of India.

While in India, Shri Lodhia had the honour of meeting the Late Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, who was extremely delighted to hear about the statue, and the association Mahatma Gandhi had with the Temple and Ladysmith. It was the Prime Minister's suggestion to have "Satya and Ahimsa", meaning "Truth and Non-violence" (Gandhi's philosophy of life) inscribed at the foot of the statue.

The statue, weighing 1700 pounds and 9½ feet in height, arrived in Durban on the 2nd January 1966, aboard the S. S. Karanja. It was brought to Ladysmith by road on 3rd January, 1966. The statue erected in the gardens of the Vishnu Temple, is mounted on a granite stone pedestal 8½ feet high. The statue has the inscription "Satya and Ahimsa" in eight different languages:— Hindi, English, Afrikaans, Urdu, Tamil Gujarati, Telegu and Zulu.

To complete the installation of the statue a beautiful rectangular fountain 40 feet by 12 feet, with the water spraying in five different dimensions has been completed. The coloured lights give the surrounding a beautiful spectacle. The fountain has been sponsored by Shri P.N. Patel of Johannesburg.

Through the initiative and foresight of the Statue Committee the "Mahatma Gandhi Statue

and Bursary Trust" has been established. The Trust has built a block of shops, offices and show-rooms in Ladysmith. The foundation stone of this building: "Mahatma Gandhi House", was laid on 4th February 1968, by Shri M. K. Lodhia of Durban. The income from this building will be utilised to provide post-matric bursaries on a non-racial basis. The bursary is meant to be a living memorial to Mahatma Gandhi, and to convey his message of peace and goodwill to all mankind.

To commemorate the Birth Centenary of Gandhiji, the Sabha has planned to have the statue officially unveiled by Shri C. C. Desai, of India. The Mahatma Gandhi House will also be officially opened by a prominent businessman of Pietermaritzburg, Shri A. Soobiah Pillay, on the same day. Shri Pillay has donated the sum of R5000 towards the Bursary fund. In appreciation of this magnanimous donation, the Sabha gave him the honour to present a Gold Medallion each to the President Shri V. V. Giri and the Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi. The presentation was made on 2nd October 1969, at the All India Gandhi Centenary Celebration — New Delhi.

To mark the 100th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and to propagate his philosophy of Truth and Non-Violence, the Sabha has issued Mahatma Gandhi Centenary Commemorative stamps and Gold Medallions.

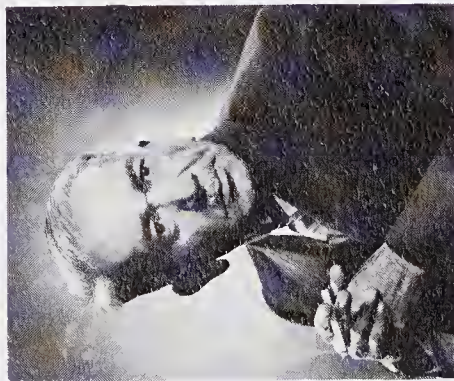
The Sabha's work was a mammoth one and it needed a person of tremendous courage to shoulder its many responsibilities. Shri Amritlal Haribhai, Trustee of the Sabha, is worthy of our tribute for his devotion and sacrifice in seeing to the successful accomplishment of our activities. He found no problem impossible. He regarded failure as a stepping stone to success. The Sabha owes him a debt of sincere gratitude and acknowledges his services.

The above review is attempted to give a true picture of the work carried out by the Sabha in fulfilling its main objectives since its formulation by the earliest pioneers over half a century ago.

From that time many have served the Sabha during its long and eventful history, and are no longer with us. There are many who are presently directing and controlling the affairs of this huge institution. The Sabha wishes to place on its record the names of all members and officials who have rendered services in some way or the other. It deviates from traditional practice by not singling out persons who have done more than the others, as the Gita says:

Service alone matters, not the reward of fame or name.

HARI OM — GOD BLESS

**T. RIGA**

One of the oldest officials in the present group, Mr. T. Riga commenced his work for the Temple many years ago and served as its President for some time. He has been a forceful worker who never conceded when principles were involved. Since his election as Trustee he has done much to improve the various aspects of temple activity.

He has been a liberal contributor with his family towards the Sabha funds and no contribution was considered too great in the interests of the Sabha. He has been associated with various cultural, religious and social organisations in Ladysmith.



TRUSTEES of SANATHAN DHARMA SABHA

**A. HARIBHAI**

Mr. Haribhai has been associated with temple activities since his youth. He has shown a keen interest in the activities of the Sabha and has followed in the worthy footsteps of his father and grandfather who have been associated with the Sabha since its inception.

His keenness in the welfare of the Sabha is so intense that he has resolved to withdraw from his business until the project is completed. He and his family have donated liberally towards the project and have spared no efforts to make it a success.

A Trustee of the Sabha, he is also a member of various social, cultural and religious organisations in Ladysmith.

**H. R. SINGH**

Mr. H. R. Singh is a keen member of the Sabha from an early age. He was Treasurer of the Society for many years. He has also held various other positions in the Sabha before he was elected a Trustee.

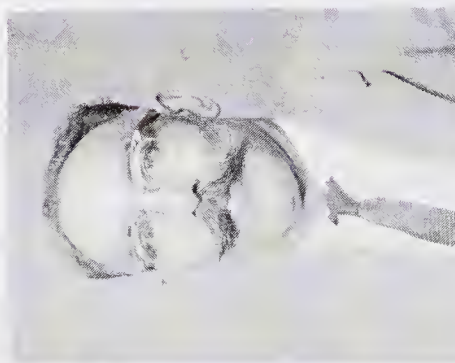
Besides his financial contributions, he has served the community in the social, religious and cultural fields and has held numerous administrative positions.

He has always encouraged members to undertake Sabha work energetically.

**B. RAMCHURRAN**

A very old member of the Sabha who has served unflinchingly as a member before he was elected to the position of Trustee.

He has for many years performed the duties of a poojaree and has not hesitated to perform any duty for the benefit of the Sabha.

**R. MOTHIERAM**

Mr. Mothieram has shown a very keen interest in the activities of the Sabha, particularly since the commencement of the new project. His contribution in the form of untiring voluntary work to the Sabha soon earned him a respected position and he was elected a Trustee.

He has sacrificed a great deal towards the erection of the school at Putnispruit and the little Hindu Temple at Putnispruit has been erected by his family who has shared the entire cost.



Mr. A. Soobiah Pillay of Pietermaritzburg presenting his Cheque of R5000.00 to Mr. R. M. Lodhia towards the Mahatma Gandhi Statue and Bursary Trust



LATE BEHARILAL CHEDIE

Served as Treasurer of Sanathan Dharma Sabha 1960 – 1970 and as a member of the Mahatma Gandhi Statue Bursary Trust. Called to rest on 27th March, 1970.

**OUR DEDICATED MEMBERS
WHOM WE REVERE**



LATE SUNDER MAHARAJ

Born 21st July, 1913. Eldest son of Mr. & Mrs. Ladhoo Maharaj and husband of Gomthie Maharaj eldest daughter of Pundit & Mrs. Bahadur Panday. Served as Committee member of the Sanathan Dharma Sabha of Ladysmith until laid to rest on 23rd July, 1970. Took personal interest in the development of the Temple grounds and was responsible for its beautiful garden.



MAHATMA GANDHI HOUSE – LADYSMITH



SHRI A. SOOBIAH PILLAY
Officially opened the Mahatma Gandhi House on
6th September, 1970.



SHRI MOHANLAL KANJEE LODHIA
Laid the foundation stone of the Mahatma Gandhi House
on 4th February, 1968.



VIEW OF TEMPLE AND FOUNTAIN

This beautiful fountain has been dedicated to Truth and Non-Violence by Parbhoochai Naranjie Patel of Ganeshwad, Sisordra, Gujarat, India.

DONOR OF THE FOUNTAIN



**PARBHOOBHAI
NARANJIE PATEL**



ENTRANCE AND GATE TO TEMPLE

Dedicated to the memory of the Late Mrs. M. K. Lodhia and Late Mrs. R. M. Lodhia of Durban.

THE VOICE OF TRUTH

The Magnificent Medallion

Featuring Mahatma Gandhi and the Lord Vishnu Temple

By SHRI J. R. SINGH

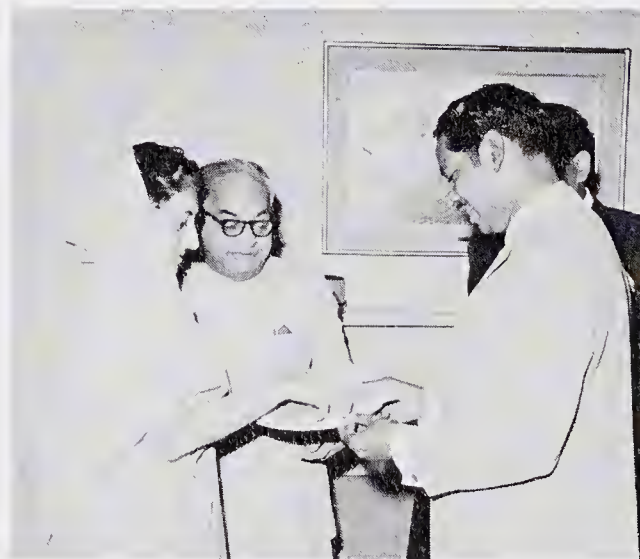
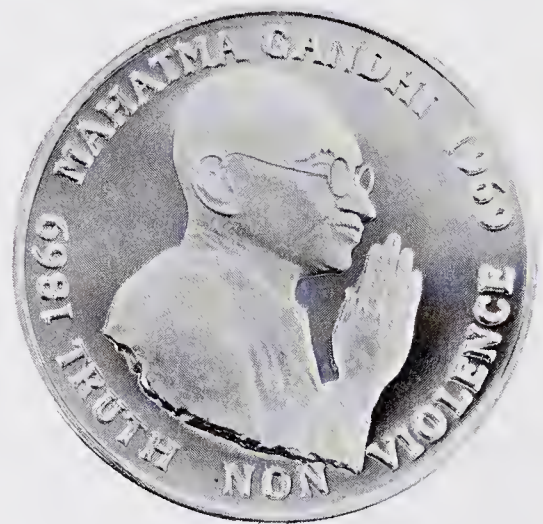
From the United Nations downwards over one hundred countries have observed 1969 as Gandhi Centenary Year, and have organised several programmes to focus attention on the universal teachings of the Mahatma. The Sanathan Dharma Sabha of Ladysmith has in a tangible form also joined hands with the rest of the world to mark this great occasion.

It has minted two thousand – twenty four carat gold coins each weighing one fine ounce. The cost of a Medallion is R60-00 and is distributed in presentation cases with an official certificate.

The coins have been sold throughout South Africa. The Sabha had sent Mr. A. S. Pillay to India to present one each of the coins to the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi and to the President of India Shri V. V. Giri. A similar presentation will be made to Lord Mountbatten who was the Viceroy of India, to Pope Paul and to the American President Mr. Nixon.

The Medallions are issued by the Netherlands Bank of South Africa, City West Branch, Durban, acting on behalf of the Mahatma Gandhi Statue and Bursary Trust.

The entire proceeds from the sale of the Medallions will go towards the created bursary fund to enable meritorious students in South Africa to study at any University and to include in their curricula some aspects of Gandhian philosophy.



Shri A. S. Pillay presenting Gold Medallion to Prime Minister, Shrimathi Indira Gandhi. Mr. C. C. Desai looking on.



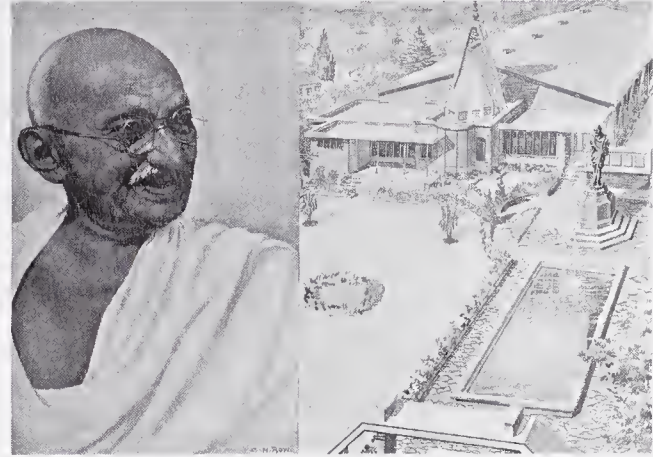
Shri A. Soobiah Pillay presenting the Gold Medallion to the State President of India, Shri V. V. Giri.

The Mahatma Gandhi Commemorative Stamp

By SHRI R. HARI

Throughout the world elaborate preparations have been undertaken to mark the centenary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi. The Sanathan Dharma Sabha, Ladysmith, has undertaken the issue and distribution of one million stamps to revive the spirit of the Gandhian Philosophy.

Each beautiful stamp depicts the historical monument of the Lord Vishnu Temple, built on the holy grounds of the old Temple where the Mahatmaji rested during his historical march to the Transvaal. In the gardens in front of the Temple, stands the bronze Statue of the Mahatmaji. The stamps also bear the pictorial head of the Mahatma overlooking the Temple.



The objectives of the issue and sale of the stamps are twofold: firstly, to commemorate the centenary of Mahatmaji's birth; secondly, to increase the funds of the Trust.

The sale of the stamps in the Republic was launched on the 5th July, 1969 by his Worship the Mayor, Councillor H. E. Ries of Ladysmith.

In his brief address the Mayor spoke about

the siege of Ladysmith and the role played by Gandhiji as stretcher-bearer in the Ambulance Corps. His Worship also expressed his sincere wishes for the success of the campaign.

On the 14th August, 1969, members of the Sabha had the honour of meeting the world renowned heart surgeon, Prof. Chris Barnard, and through him launched the stamp sales in Cape Town.



The Mayor of Ladysmith, Councillor H. E. Ries launching the sale of stamps in Ladysmith.

Greetings from
His Worship the Mayor of Cape Town
(Councillor G. E. Ferry)

As Mayor of the Mother City of the Republic, I am pleased to associate myself with the Mahatma Gandhi Statue and Bursary Trust and wish it every success in achieving its objects.

Mahatma Gandhi's life of devotion to his people is admired by all, irrespective of creed or colour, and it is fitting that his memory should be honoured in a permanent manner.

*CITY HALL,
CAPE TOWN.
13th AUGUST, 1969.*



The Mayor of Cape Town Councillor G. E. Ferry with world renowned heart surgeon Prof. Chris Bernard launching the sale of stamps in the Cape.

GANDHI—

His Early Experiments in South Africa

By R. KALLIDEEN. B.A.

IT IS NEITHER POSSIBLE nor conceivable in this article to touch even on the bare glimpses of the life of Gandhiji. The world is quite familiar with the diverse achievements of this great man, who by tolerance, patience, forbearance, learning and truth, shines as an immortal soul.

His success had sprung from humility and human understanding. He attempted the most difficult and found success. His own religious principles led him to the formulation of satyagraha: non-violent resistance, which combines hatred of oppression with love of the oppressor. The application of this led to the meeting of two of the world's great men, when the Smuts-Gandhi agreement was worked out in 1914, and its

application in India, led to Indian independence and the transformation of the British Commonwealth.

As Gandhi grew, his philosophy of life blossomed in myriads of ways. One of the essential features of it was service which identified the individual with self-purification and the realization of truth. Gandhi's experience of service took shape in the very early years of his life in Natal, when he had associated himself with Ladysmith: a town which has an imposing, character-revealing statue of the Mahatma.

Gandhi's link with Ladysmith and its districts goes as far back as the 11th of October, 1899 when the Transvaal and the Orange Free



Indian Ambulance Corps during the siege of Ladysmith. Presbyterian Church converted into hospital.



Indian stretcher-bearers cross a stream, carrying wounded to base hospital in Ladysmith after an incident during the siege.



Twenty Fourth Field Hospital – Ladysmith. Staff included the Indian Ambulance Corps. Sheltered hospital in front view.

State were officially at war with Britain, a war, commonly known as the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). "Fundamentally, it was an imperial war," in which the South Africa policy of Chamberlain, British Secretary of State for Colonies, and Alfred Milner, his High Commissioner for South Africa, was pitted against the sincere but stubborn patriotism of Presidents Kruger and Steyn. The war itself was the final phase in the struggle between the Boer and British for hegemony in South Africa.

Gandhi had said "my personal sympathies were all with the Boers," but loyalty to the British rule impelled him to participate with the British against the Boers. Duty and devotion determined his line of action, and it became his duty to defend the British Empire and Natal, which was then a British Colony.

By then, the Indians in Natal were subjected to severe legislations. This did not deter him from fulfilling his obligations in defence of the Empire. He succeeded in winning the majority of Indians to his point of view and mustered a large force to serve as an ambulance corps.

The average Englishman, then doubted the sincerity of the Indian and dubbed him as "a coward, incapable of taking risks or looking beyond his immediate self-interest" but Gandhi found support in both Dr. Booth, head of the Saint Aidan's Mission Hospital and the Bishop of Natal.

Already he had training under Dr. Booth for hospital work. A further course in ambulance duty was given to the enlisted men with Dr. Booth as Medical Superintendent and Gandhi its de facto leader. The force comprised 1110 persons: about three hundred free Indians and the remaining indentured. The corps gave unstinted service, acting with bravery both outside and



Monument in memory of those who fell in active service at Spionkop.

within the firing line, although the terms of service did not require them to perform duties within the firing line.



British War Graves on summit of Spionkop. Soldiers who fell during the Anglo-Boer War 1899 – 1902. Rugged Tugela Basin in the back ground.

When the battle shifted to the defence of Spionkop, an imposing hill overlooking the broken terrain of the huge Tugela Basin, and only fifteen miles from Ladysmith, Gandhi and his stretcher-bearers had to convey the wounded a distance of twenty to twenty-five full miles a day. Ladysmith was in the thick of fighting at this time, being invested by the Boer Commander, General Joubert for four months. The siege was lifted on 28th February, 1900. The work of the stretcher-bearers was much applauded, and in the eyes of the British, the status of the Indians in Natal was raised. General Buller, in appreciation of the work rendered, mentioned the Indians in despatches. Several leaders were awarded war medals.

When the issue of the war was no longer in doubt, Gandhi made a trip back to India. The Natal Indians relieved him reluctantly and on condition that he returned within a year.

In India, he attended the meeting of the Indian Congress at Calcutta in 1901. There he brought home to the delegates the secret of service. He stressed that "service is no mushroom growth. It presupposes the will and then the experience" Spionkop had developed in the young Gandhi



INDIAN VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE CORPS BOER-WAR 1899 - 1902

H. Kitchen; S. Shadrack; Lipandary; R. Pandya; J. Royeppen; R. K. Khan; M. K. Kotharee; E. Peters; D. Vinden; V. Madanjit
P. K. Naidoo; V. Lawrence; M. H. Nazar; Rev. Dr. Booth; M. K. Gandhi; M. Royeppen
L. Gabriel; W. Jonathan; Prof. Dhunde; S. M. Naidoo; D. David; A. A. Gandhi



As Captain of the Indian Ambulance Corps during the Zulu Rebellion in South Africa 1906.

a sense of duty, feeling and compassion which he carried with him with dignity, during the rest of his stay in South Africa till 1914.

In India, the struggle for Indian Independence involved with him greater forces, but within him, recall to the experiences gained in South Africa gave him greater inspiration. Having spent the formative years of his life here, there is no doubt that his sojourn was causative in shaping his personality.

The Indian Ambulance Corps was called once more into action during the Zulu Rebellion of 1906. Again it was the British Empire that was involved. Governed by principles of loyalty he went to serve with twenty four strong. In the Rebellion, Gandhi cherished the idea of having served the wounded Zulus, marching some forty miles a day with stretchers on shoulders in the oppressive summer heat of Natal and through rugged country-side.

In his Autobiography, Gandhi says that service in South Africa had revealed to him new implications of truth at every stage of his life. Ladysmith and Spionkop helped the dawning of the revelation, and through him illuminated a sub-continent and the world at large.

LADYSMITH RESIDENTS — STILL ACTIVE

... They followed Gandhi 56 years ago



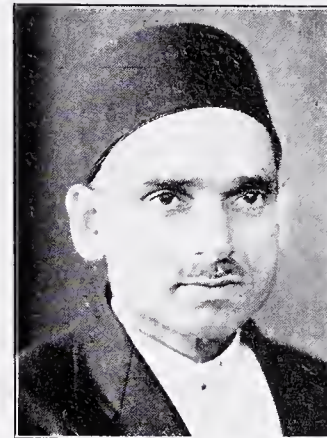
SHRI JODHA SINGH — Born in India and emigrated to South Africa as an indentured labourer. Resides at Ladysmith, Natal. Age about 90 years. Gave the following graphic account of Gandhi:

"When I completed my term of indenture, I was employed by the South African Railways at Dannhauser. When Gandhi led the strikers to the Transvaal, I joined the group. We marched together until we reached Volksrust where we were stopped entry into the next province. The gate was closed. I returned from there. One pleasant memory I have of Gandhi is the way he used to hold the hands of the people during the march. He was a dynamic leader and we simply followed him."

SHRIMATI JODHA SINGH, wife of Jodha Singh has this to say:

"I was thirteen years of age during the 1913 Gandhi's strike. When the men of Ladysmith joined the marches to the Transvaal, the women and children from the Railway Barracks were

given refuge at the Old Sanathan Dharam Sabha building. We were fed by the Indian store-keepers who provided groceries and organised a soup kitchen for the affected families.



HAJEE CASSIM ASMAL — Born in Surat, India about 1872. Arrived in South Africa as an immigrant in 1893 and established the present firm of C. S. Asmal & Company. He reports:

"The first time I saw Gandhi was during his visit to Ladysmith to garland a retiring magistrate, Mr. Rudolf, at the Ladysmith Court House. I was also associated with Gandhi during the 1913 struggle in South Africa against the three pound tax imposed on the Indians. I can recollect vividly how about four hundred miners from Elands-laagte coal mine marched to Ladysmith to lodge their protest. I made my contributions at Ladysmith by establishing a soup kitchen for the strikers. I later learnt that the tax law was repealed by the Union Government."

TRIBUTE BY A DISCIPLE

The following letter was written to the Sabha by Late Mr. V. Lawrence a few months before his death.

As Mahatma Gandhiji's private secretary for six years in South Africa, and as Chairman of the Mahatmaji's Memorial Trust, have the greatest pleasure, in paying this humble tribute to my revered Guru, in revered memory of association with him, during the Passive Resistance movement.

(Signed) **V. LAWRENCE**

Commissioner of Oaths for the District of Durban, Natal.
63, Gale Street, Durban.

15th June, 1964.

To Mahatma Gandhi's private secretary for six years in South Africa, and as Chairman of the Mahatmaji's Memorial Trust, have the greatest pleasure, in paying this humble tribute to my revered Guru, in revered memory of association with him, during the Passive Resistance movement.

V. Lawrence
Commissioner of Oaths
for the District of Durban, Natal
63 Gale Street, Durban
15 June 1964



AS A SATYAGRAHI IN SOUTH AFRICA

BATTLE WITHOUT ARMS

By H. R. MAHARAJH, B.A.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY has to its credit many laudable achievements of which man may be truly proud, and two world wars, destructive and shameful — a memento of man's hatred, jealousy, selfishness and savagery.

Even to this day the hot cold-war continues, nations are spending colossal sums on arms, and scientists are expending their energy and intelligence bestowed upon them by God, on the annihilation of His Creation — man. The atomic and hydrogen bombs, and the destructive power of rockets hang like the sword of Democles on civilisation. In such a context the peace mission of Mahatma Gandhi becomes meaningful for the whole of mankind.

Gandhiji lived through turbulent times of warfare, political struggles and social and racial injustices out of which was born his philosophy of Satyagraha, the most potent instrument of peace, opposed not only to beastly violence and bloodshed, but, in a wider context, also to all forms of injustice and prejudice injurious to the inherent dignity of man. "Ultimately," says Gandhiji,

"force, however justifiably used, will lead us into the same morass as the force of Hitler and Mussolini. There will be just a difference of degree. Those who believe in Satyagraha (non-violence) must use it at the critical moment . . ."

The Satyagrahi's course is long and arduous, requiring tremendous personal sacrifice on the part of the followers, and even greater courage, physical and spiritual, than that in warfare for he must live with his conviction, defending it throughout the uphill struggle. There is no escaping. It is in no way to be associated with cowardice and fear, for "non-violence, as I understand it, is the most active force in the world . . . Non-violence is the supreme law".

On the other hand, Satyagraha is diametrically opposed to cowardly behaviour and lack of responsibility. Gandhiji urges: "Don't run from a situation of suffering: plunge into it boldly, not out of bravado or asceticism or self-martyrdom, but because if you bear it in the right spirit for the helping of other people such suffering becomes creative for the righting of wrong".



1930 Mahatma Gandhi (centre) with his collaborators on the historic Dandi march for salt production

Mahatma Gandhi was not just an idealist for he translated his doctrines into action in many practical situations. The first test of Satyagraha and its devotee was on South African soil: Gandhiji was travelling by train to Charlestown: "On the train," relates Gandhiji, "I had a first class ticket, but not a bed ticket. At Maritzburg when the beds were issued, the guard came and turned me out, and asked me to go into the van compartment. I would not go, and the train steamed away leaving me shivering in the cold . . . I entered the dark waiting room. There was a white man in the room. I was afraid of him. What was my duty, I asked myself. Should I go back to India, or should I go forward, with God as my helper, and face whatever was in store for me? I decided to stay and suffer. My active non-violence began from that date" . . .

"It was in South Africa that the doctrine of Satyagraha was conceived, that the weapon of non-violent resistance was forged." (J.H. Hofmeyr: Mahatma Gandhi: Essays and Reflections on his Life and Work).

After the memorable but bitter experience of the railway journey, South Africa was to become the battlefield of the Satyagraha movement waged to obtain and defend the rights of the voiceless Indians. When he returned from India in 1896, an aggressive crowd of Europeans was waiting for Gandhiji at the Durban harbour in order to assault him, alleging that he had besmirched the name of Europeans in India and tried to inundate Natal with Indian settlers. These allegations the Mahatma strongly denied. His disembarking was postponed to the evening when, it was hoped, the wild and hostile crowd would disperse. On the way he was recognised and greeted by his European hosts with a shower of stones and rotten eggs. Some struck off his turban from his head and

kicked him. Gandhiji fell into a faint. The timely arrival of the police saved him from further violence, and perhaps death. Even the house into which Gandhiji was led under police escort was surrounded by the furious mob still thirsty for violence.

The whole ugly event came to an anti-climax when Gandhiji, asked by the higher authorities to bring the assailants before the law, resolved to forgive them. This attitude towards his "enemies" aroused deep respect for Gandhiji and the Indian community, and added impetus to the Satyagraha movement. Gandhiji had gained a moral victory with his weapon of Satyagraha.

Gandhiji had illustrated his doctrine in full twice already, but as Tulsidas sings in the Ramayana "patience, virtue, friendship, and the fidelity of the fair one must be tested in times of stress and crisis," more severe tests were to follow which revealed his sincerity and great spiritual force.

In 1906, under Gandhiji's inspiration and leadership, Indians in Johannesburg pledged to resist to the bitter end the Transvaal Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance. He organised Satyagraha against this, and was ordered to leave the Transvaal within forty eight hours. Gandhi disobeyed. He preferred to serve a jail sentence of two months for the cause of the people, thus consolidating the foundation of the Satyagraha movement which was being perfected as the most potent weapon of the unprivileged and subjected peoples in years to come.

A compromise was reached with General Smuts and Gandhiji was released from jail. However, in August 1908 when Smuts repudiated the compromise Gandhiji resumed Satyagraha. He was sentenced to two year's imprisonment.



A CONSULTATION

Group consisting of Messrs. M. K. Gandhi, H. Kallenbach, G. Isaac and Mrs. Polak at Maritzburg Station, when leaving for Durban

Events were proving that "Satyagraha is always infinitely superior to physical violence". In 1913 Gandhiji led the Satyagraha march into the Transvaal in reply to the South African Government's repudiation of the promise to repeal the tax on ex-indentured Indians. His arrest and imprisonment followed.

Laying aside of arms and the resort to peaceful methods "does not mean weak submission to the will of the evil doer but rather the putting of our whole soul against the will of the

tyrant". (Gandhiji)

In South Africa Satyagraha proved so successful that Gandhiji employed it in India to secure Swarajya (Independence) from Britain, the mistress of a vast empire, after two hundred years of foreign rule. With regard to the struggle in the Transvaal and its significance for India, Gandhiji wrote: "It may be a slow remedy, but I regard it as an absolutely sure remedy, not only for our ills in the Transvaal, but for all the political and other troubles from which our people suffer in India"



MAHATMA GANDHI WITH GOKHALE AT PIETERMARITZBURG STATION

Khadi and Village Industries Commission

Activities at a Glance

By SHRI UCHHRNGRAI NAVALSHANKAR DHEBAR

RELEVANCE OF THE PROGRAMME

Gandhiji saw in the declining khadi and village industries a powerful weapon to awaken the masses, to rekindle in them a sense of pride and self-confidence and a spirit of Swadeshi and to relieve, to the extent possible, the poverty of the people. He established two organisations for this purpose, the All India Spinners' Association and the All India Village Industries Association. Khadi in the words of Jawaharlal Nehru became the livery of freedom. It was natural, therefore, for the first National Government which came into power after Independence, to carry forward the programme and soon it became a part of the national planning.



Shri U. N. DHEBAR

Chairman of the
Khadi & Village
Industries
Commission,
India.

The need for such a programme flows inevitably from the peculiar feature of Indian economy. Scores of studies and sample surveys have brought out in sharp focus the peculiar conditions obtaining in the country. Over 82 per cent of our people live in the villages, of whom the large majority subsist on agriculture. Agriculture with less than one acre per capita holdings is already overcrowded.

It is agreed on all hands that it will take years before the process of industrialisation can cope with this special problem. Rather than provide doles to the people it has been thought that from the broad standpoint of national economic development as well as from the special point of view of ensuring economic equality the promotion of these industries should be encouraged. This has proved

one of the priceless gifts of the Father of the Nation to the masses of India.

Industries

The industries coming within the purview of the commission are:

- a) Textile Industry: Khadi;
- b) Food Processing Industries;
- c) Forest-based Industries; and
- d) Other Industries such as paper, beekeeping, pottery, flaying, curing and tanning of hides and skins, fibre, manufacture and use of manure and methane-gas from waste products, lime-manufacturing, blacksmithy, carpentry, fruit processing and fruit preservation and manufacture of house-hold utensils in aluminium.

Finance, Account and Audit

The Government of India bears the entire responsibility for finance both for capital expenditure and working capital as also for training and equipment.

Institutions

Now there are 1,500 registered institutions and 18,000 co-operative societies engaged in khadi and twenty other village industries and employing 2 million artisans, spreading to over hundred thousand villages.

Performance

The production of khadi — cotton, silk and woollen — is of the order of Rupees 1,100 million. Production of village industries articles is of the order of Rupees 2,250 million. The wages paid to the artisans in khadi work annually are of the order of Rupees 660 million and in village industries Rupees 450 million.

Research

The commission has been continuously organising research in designing and fabricating improved tools and implements for khadi as well as other village industries. Rationalisation of many processes in village industries and diversification have resulted in improving both quality and quantity of production and enhanced productivity and income of the artisans.

The important objections under the Plan period are to increase the present level of wages by means of organisational improvements and technological innovations, bearing in mind the social aspect of expanding the present level of employment.

GANDHIJI IS NO MORE . . .

This second crucifixion in the history of the world
has been enacted on a Friday—the same day Jesus
was done to death; one thousand nine hundred
and fifty-two years ago

HÉ RAM!



Mahatma Gandhi Statue and Bursary Trust

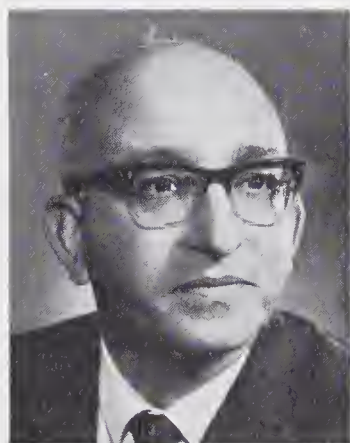
For his supreme effort to eradicate
the evils that plagued mankind this
monument is dedicated with love
and affection

BIOGRAPHIES OF FOUNDATION SPONSORS



LATE SHRI SEUBAJAN AJODHA

Born—Durban 1867. Worked in Sugar Cane Farm. Later joined the Natal Police Force. Served in the Boer-War 1899–1901. Went to Transvaal—1903. Worked as Farmer and Gold Miner. First member of Prayer Circle, Newclare. Organised a 40 day Gita Discourse in 1924. Established Hindi School in Newclare, Johannesburg in 1925. Life Trustee—Sanathan Ved Dharma Sabha, Johannesburg.



SHRI GULAB AMAIDAS

Born—1921. Educated—Ladysmith Government Indian School. Qualified tailor. Started business 25 years ago at Colenso as Graduate Tailors and Outfitters. Keen tennis player. Secretary of Dundee Indian Tennis Club and Siegetown Tennis Club. Takes interest in Religious, Social cultural and educational work. Presently director of Amrit Enterprises (Pty) Ltd, Ladysmith. Shrimati Vajia Amaidas and brothers are sponsors to the Mahatma Gandhi Statue and Bursary Trust in memory of late Shri Amaidas Ranchod.

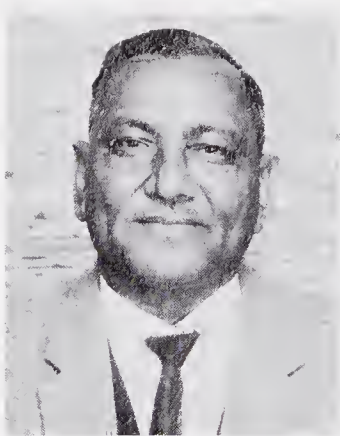
SHRI VALAYUTHUM AROONSLAM

Born—1914 at Port Elizabeth. Educated at William Pascot School, Kimberly. Married in 1936 to Minnieammal Naidoo. Successful businessman. Presently in business at Grahamstown. President of Swaraj Cricket Club. Trustees of the Sarasvathi Educational Institution, Shri Siva Subramanier Aulayam and V.K.K. Sungam. Interested in propagating the Tamil language.



LATE SHRI BHANABHAI PARSOTHAM

Born Kadod, India. Pioneer Businessman of Durban. Devoted Educationalist. Contributed to the upliftment of the community in all Educational and cultural matters. Committee member of Surat Hindu Association, Durban. Associated with Mahatma Gandhi during Satyagah movement in South Africa. Founder and Chairman of Surat Prajapathi Association. This sponsorship dedicated in memory of father by his youngest son Shri Keshu Bhana of Durban.



SHRI MOORJEE BHANA HADA

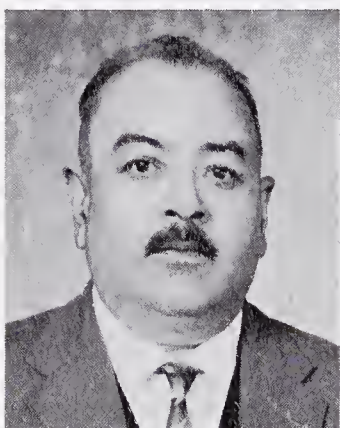
Age 60 years. Born in Jodiya, Rajkot, India—1909. Emigrated to South Africa—1914. Educated at St. Anthony's Primary School and the Higher Grade School—Durban. Married to Gori Bhoora of Jodiya in 1931. Was in Timber Business in Durban. Retired. Business taken over by eldest son. Keen soccerite—played against Rhodesia. Treasurer of Mayawant Association and Senior warden, 1939–45 World War. Associated with: Natal Indian Timber Merchants' Association, Kathiawad Hindu, Seva Samaj and S.A. Hindu Maha Sabha.

SHRI KALYAN BHIMA

Sponsorship to Mahatma Gandhi Statue and Bursary Trust by Kalyan Bros of Pretoria, in memory of their late father and mother, Mr. & Mrs Bhima Valla.

Late Mr. Bhima Valla was associated with Mahatma Gandhi stayed with Gandhiji at 356 Vermuelen Street, Pretoria.

Kalyan Bhima is a successful businessman in the Transvaal. Associated with cultural, religious and educational institutions.



LATE SHRI ANANDBHAI BHIMA

Born—Saurashtra, India. Emigrated to South Africa—1914. Lived by twin principles: devotion to duty and strict adherence to truth. Associated with Gandhiji. Supported many charities. Died 1969.

SHRI HARKISON PARSHOTAM BHAGAT

Born 6th April, 1911 at Navsari, India. Emigrated to South Africa 1920. Educated at Bree Street Indian School, Johannesburg. Conducted Bombay Tailors at Brakpan till 1968. Presently trading as Craft Tailors, Elandsfontein, Transvaal.



SHRI RAMAN BHANA

Industrialist and director of Companies in Port Elizabeth. Leading sports administrator. Plays a prominent role in Educational and Welfare bodies. Member of the South African Indian Council.



LATE SHRI DULLABH BHAI BHIKABHAI

Born Navsari, India 1882. Emigrated to South Africa in 1901 after the Boer-War. Entered into Laundry business. Enthusiastic Religious, Social, Educational and Cultural worker. Treasurer of Hindu Society of East London for a number of years. Later established Fairview Steam Laundry and Dry Cleaning Works. Died 21/11/1956.

SHRI HARI BHAGA

Emigrated to South Africa in 1926 to join parents who came in 1896. Educated in Gujarati in India and in English and Afrikaans in South Africa.

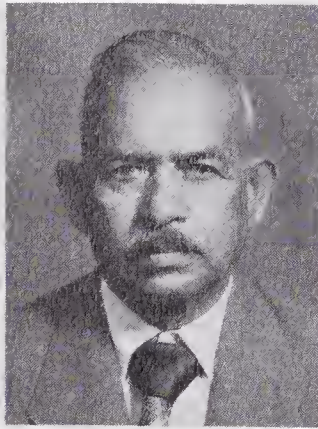
Father—Shri Bhaga Chita established business in Boksburg Asiatic Bazaar—1896. Presently trading at Vlaktefontein Farm, Brentwood Park Transvaal. Deeply interested in Hindu religion. Well-known member of the district. Lost wife, Kasi in 1953.



SHRI ISHWAR M. BHOOLA

Born—1927 at Plessislaer. Educated at Greyville Govt. Indian School. Married to Vitumati.

Council member of Gujarati Vedic Society. Chairman of Gujarati Vedic State-Aided Indian School. Presently its grantee. Vice-chairman of Edendale and District Local Health Commission. Successful businessman. Managing Director of M. Bhoola & Co. (Pty) Ltd; Plessislaer.



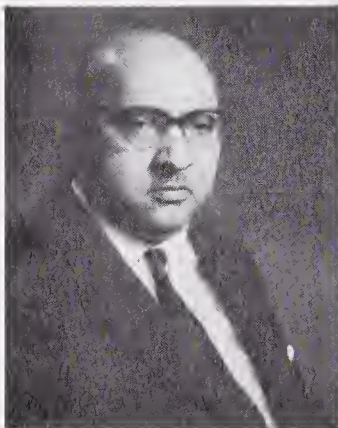
SHRI RAMJAM DENALLO CHOWTHEE

Age 70 years. Born in India. Built the Chowthee Government-Aided Indian School. Provided building on two acres at Farm Rock. Sponsored classrooms at Umzinto Indian High School and the Isipingo Indian Primary School. Has given half-acre site at Merebank for a new Hindi School and temple, and land at Sea Cow Lake to the Durban Indian Child Welfare Society. Presented cemetery site in Park Rynie. Commissioner of Oaths for Umzinto and districts. Gifts totals more than R30,000-00. Businessman and former chairman of the Natal Indian Tobacco Growers' Co-operative Society Ltd.

LATE SHRI BEHARIELAL CHEDIE

Born 12th February 1919. Educated Ladysmith Government Indian School (Windsor High School) Prominent businessman. General Dealer and Green Grocer.

Hon. Treasurer of Sanathan Dharma Sabha, Ladysmith. Member Young Hindu Cultural Service Society and Hindi Shiksha Sabha, Ladysmith. Served Ladysmith Civic Association and Education Committee Member of M.C. Varman School. Died 27th March 1970.



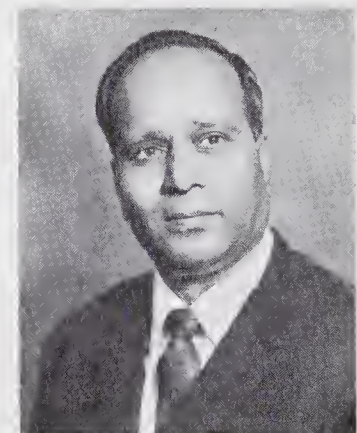
SHRI G. DHANJEE

Born 6th February, 1916 in Verulam, Natal. Owns General Dealers and Fruiterers' business in Grey Street, Durban. Associated with Aryan Benevolent Home and Clayton Garden Old Men's Home.

Chairman—Durban Hitchoo Mandal. Vice-Chairman—Surat Hindu State Aided Indian School and chairman—Durban Bordoli Society.

SHRI SIVALINGA DASS

Born 7th September, 1911 at Durban. Educated at Springfield. Second son of Mr. Narasimha Dass, a noted singer and composer of Andhra Lyrics. Narasimha Dass participated in Mahatma Gandhi's march across the Transvaal. Married to Visvodhamma. Followed father's occupation by taking up farming. Entered transport business in 1940. Director of Combined Transport (Pty) Ltd., Vice-President of Andhra Maha Sabha. Visited India, Pakistan and Japan.



SHRI POORAN DOOKIE

Born—1922, Elangslaagte, Natal. Educated at Dannhauser. Mine worker, welder, factory worker, driver, clerk. Present owner of General Cartage Contractor and owns a fleet of vehicles.

Patron—D.N.C. Indian Sport Club.

Trustee—Dannhauser Hindu Maha Sabha.

Member—Dannhauser Indian School Board.

Member—Child Welfare Society—Dannhauser Branch.



LATE SHRI LACHMAN DASS

Sponsored in memory of Late father, by Dass Bros.

BENONI

SHRI A. PAKKIRI GOVENDER

Had humble beginning. Lost parents at early age. Educated at Umgeni Government Indian School and Carlisle Street Higher Grade School. Served Natal Glass Works for seventeen years and Woods Glass Works for five years. Now in partnership with Mr. P.C. Chetty in Cutrite Glass Works. Associated with sporting bodies and educational institutions. Travelled widely. Visited Europe.



LATE MISS NELLIE MATILDA GODFREY

Born in Durban 11th November, 1887. Daughter of the late Mr. & Mrs. S. Godfrey of 131 Vactoria Street, Durban. Loved and respected. Will be remembered for her acts of generosity.

Hailed from a pioneering family well-known to the late Mahatma Gandhi. Died 1966.



SHRI B. GANGARAM

Successful businessman. Past director of K. Baijnath & Co. (Pty) Ltd; Durban. Owner of Glorious Stores, Victoria Street, Durban.

LATE SHRI JAGJIVAN DHARAMSHI GARACH

Born—1883 at Jam Kalavad, Saurashtra India. Arrived in South Africa 1902. Successful watch repairer. Well-known as “Ghadyali.” Died in 1934 in India.



LATE SHRI MOHANLAL MANJEE CHELANI

Born—India. Arrived in South Africa at the age of 16 years. Took part in first passive resistance movement under Mahatma Gandhi 1908. Stayed at Tolstoy Farm with Gandhi. Died in 1943. Business in Louis Trichardt now managed by sons.

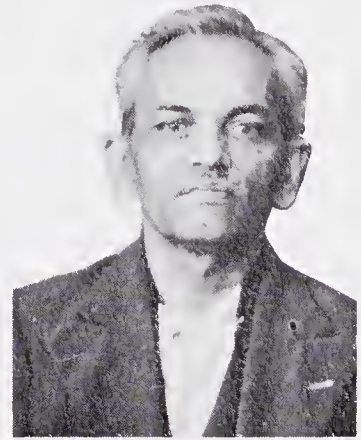
LATE SHRI A. GOKAL (AMARSHI GOKALDAS)

Born—1881 at Gorana near Porbandar (Saurashtra). Left India in 1900 for Madagascar. Emigrated to Lourenco Marques. Established business there. Arrived—South Africa in 1907. Started business at Pietersburg. Moved to Louis Trichardt. Established business in the name of A. Gokal & Sons. Conducted by sons as Great North Distributors (Pty) Ltd. Visited India often. Actively took part in welfare and education of Indian Community. Died—1961 at Porbandar, India.



LATE SHRI LALLOOBHAI GOPAR

Born in Kanhi, Surat. Emigrated to South Africa. Moved from King Williamstown to East London. Deeply religious. Former President of East London Hindu Society and East London Indian Congress. Did the pilgrimage of Badrinath and Kedarnath on foot. Died on 5th December, 1951 at the age of 65 years. Left behind a flourishing business—managed by sons and grandsons.



SHRI BRIJLAL JEEVANJEE GOVINDJEE

Born in Port Elizabeth 1922. Educated at Weiss School, Port Elizabeth. Married to Kantabhen of Johannesburg. Conducts well-established business, Port Elizabeth. Active sportsman. Played cricket for Eastern Province, and tennis on national level. Deeply religious. Staunch supporter of Arya Samaj movement. Believes in "Practice what you Preach." Trustee of Kshytriya Gujarati Mandal. Was chairman of Yuvak Mandal. Joint treasurer of South African Kshytriya Maha Sabha's Educational Trust.

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SHRIMATI ITCHABEN LALLOOBHAI GIHWALA

Sponsorship to Mahatma Gandhi Statue and Bursary. Trust in memory of her husband the late Mr. Lalloobhai Chaganlal Gihwala of Cape Town.



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SHRI RANCHOD GOPAL

Born Saltaupur, Surat, India—20th July, 1896. Became orphaned at the age of 10 years. Adopted by uncle Ranchod Govind at Kambia Village, India. Emigrated to South Africa in 1910. Returned to India 1916 and married Vijaya. Established own shoe and outfitting business in 1921 Port Elizabeth. Prominent Religious and Social Worker. Now retired.

SHRI M.T. GIHWALA

Born—19th June, 1922. Son of Mr. & Mrs. T.C. Gihwala of Cape Town. Educated at Zonnebloem Boys High School, Cape Town and Lovedale College, Alice, Cape. Married to Luxmi Harison in India. Managed father's business for 20 years after returning to South Africa. Presently manages own business. Connected with many business Companies. Resides at Worcester, Cape.



SHRI PARBHOO HARGOVAN

Born in India 1888. Participated in Satyagraha movement in South Africa under Mahatma Gandhi. Founder of P. Hargovan & Co. (Pty) Ltd.

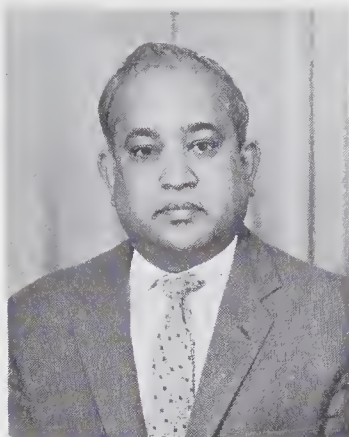
SHRI UMIASHANKER MANISHANKER JOKHAKER

S.S.C; P.T.C. (Bombay) Bhargav Brahmin. Born 1913, Bodham, Surat, India. Qualified Teacher. Taught at Ahmedabad, Gujarati Municipal Schools and night schools for Harijans in India, and several schools in the Transvaal. Priest, Social worker and Disciple of Mahatma Gandhi. Present Principal Shree Lenasia Gujarati School.



SHRI LALLOOBHAI HARIBHAI

Born—1st June, 1897, Undach, India. Son of pioneer settler in South Africa. Arrived in 1911. Started business in East London. Student and follower of Gandhian philosophy. Author. Published some 52 books in Gujarati. "Vandna Granth," collection of his writings and compendium of tributes, published by South African Kshatriya Maha Sabha in his honour. Wrote under name of "Lahari".



SHRI KASAN JAGA

Born—India 1916. Settled in Cape Town 1919. Travelled to India on numerous occasions. Interested in affairs of Community.

SHRIMATI LATE LAXMIBEN

Sponsored in memory of his late mother by Shri Champaklal Jivan Patel Bros of Johannesburg.



SHRI BEHARIE JUGMOHAN

Born—Tonga—September 1905 of indentured parents. Educated at Springfield Methodist Mission School. Humble beginning — factory worker, gardener. Now successful businessman. Owns Modern Service Station at Reservoir Hills. Philanthropist. Promotes Hindi.

SHRI G.C. KAPITAN

Prominent Businessman of Durban.



MESSERS KOOVARJEE BROS

General Merchants of Estcourt.



SHRI MAGANLALL KANJEE

Businessman of Fordsburg, Joahnnesburg.

LATE SHRI LILADHAR GOPALDAS KARA

(11th August 1916 – 1st December, 1964) Served in the Educational, Cultural and Religious fields. Well-known member of Community.



SHRI KARA NICHHA

Prominent businessman of Pietermaritzburg.



SHRI VALLABH KANJI

Businessman of Boksburg, Transvaal.

SHRI DULPATHBHAI KESHAV

Director of Navada Clothing (Pty) Ltd., of Johannesburg.



SHRIMATI TAPEENBEN N. KALIDAS

Sponsorship to the Mahatma Gandhi Bursary Trust in memory of her late Husband, Nathoo Bhai Kalidas and late son Chotubhai Kalidas of Simonstown.

SHRI DEVCHAND P. KESSOW

Prominent businessman of Simonstown, Social and religious worker. Sports administrator. Associated with the late Mrs. Sarojini Naidoo in 1926 and Baroda Girl Guide's visit to South Africa. Founded Cape Hindu Cricket Club, Arcadia Physical Club. In 1946-48 served on Indian National Congress Committee, Bardoli Area Branch, India. Instrumental in village reform movement. Present Trustee of United Hindu Gujarati Association.



LATE SHRI CHAGAN V. KARSAN

Born—Bombay—1903. Emigrated to South Africa—1906 Businessman in the Cape Province. Social and religious worker. Member of Indian Civic Association. Died 27th March, 1948.

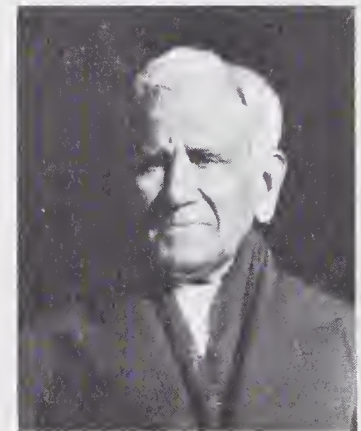


SHRI JAGDEO KALLIDEEN

Born—1927 at Ladysmith. Businessman. Religious and Social Worker. Vice-president of Hindu Yuvak Sabha. Served on Sporting Clubs.

LATE SHRI VINCENT LAWRENCE

Born—Madras, India on 10th September, 1827. Trained as a Teacher. Emigrated to South Africa. Secretary to Mahatma Gandhi. Served in Indian Ambulance Corp in Boer-War. Awarded Queen's Medal. Member of many religious, cultural and educational institutions. Pioneer member of Natal Indian Congress. Trustee of M.L. Sultan Technical College. Commissioner of Oaths. Received Coronation Medal, King's Jubilee Medal, South African War Medal, Pope's Medal. Died 12th September, 1965 at age of 93 years.



SHRI BHANJI LAXMAN

Born—1904. Emigrated to East Africa 1924. Jeweller and Watch Repairer. Industrialist — engaged in Sisal plantations. President of Hindu Mandal and Shree Soni Seva Mandal of East Africa. Social Worker.

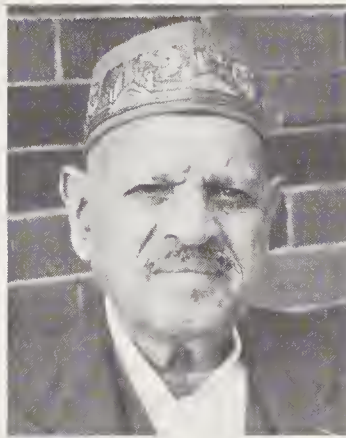


SHRI PEMA LALLA PRAJAPATHI

Born—1898 at Palsana, Baroda, India. Educated at Palsana. Emigrated to South Africa 1914. Successful Tailor. Vice-President of Transvaal Prajapati Association and Vice-President and Trustee of Pretoria Hindu Seva Samaj. Helped to establish tailoring business for all ten of his staff in the Transvaal.

KASSAN LALA

Born in Baroda State, India 1907. Emigrated to South Africa with parents 1922. Returned in India in 1930 and married Lakhi Chibba in 1931. Returned and settled in Middelburg. Transvaal Businessman. Respected by all sections of the Community. Toured India in 1962.

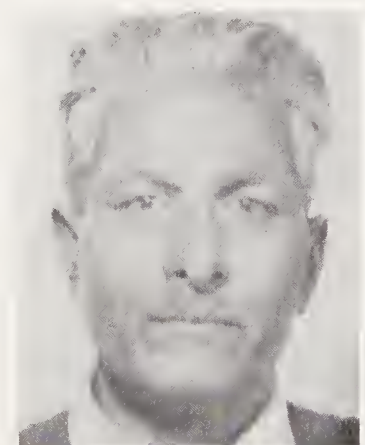


PUNDIT LALLA MAHARAJ

Born—Kanpur, (United Province) India. Emigrated to Natal 1896 with indentured parents. Established flourishing business in Indian Market. Sanskrit scholar. Takes part in religious and cultural work. Founder of Sanathan Dharma Sabha (Natal). Trustee. Associated with Divine Life Society. Made pilgrimages to India.

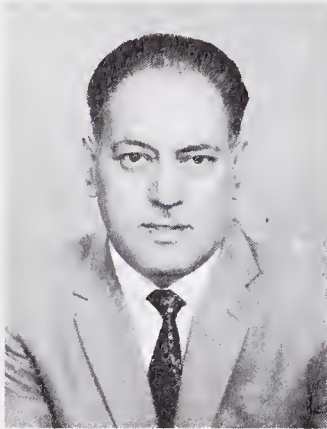
LATE SHRI BABOONUNAN MAHARAJ

Born—Putnispruit, Ladysmith—1899. Worked for district surgeon of Ladysmith for 37 years. Member of Sanathan Dharma Sabha. Founder and Trustee of Hindu Yuvak Sabha. Sponsorship to Mahatma Gandhi Statue and Bursary Fund made in his memory by son H.B. Maharaj on behalf of family.



SHRI SOMJEEBHAI LALLOOBHAI MISTRY

Emigrated to South Africa in 1920. Established as S.L. Mistry & Sons (Pty) Limited, General Dealers, and Mistry's Commercial Agencies as Bookkeepers and Insurance Consultants at Middelburg Transvaal.

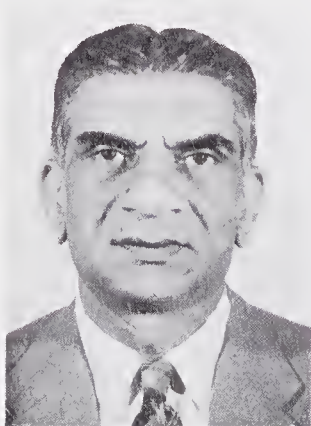
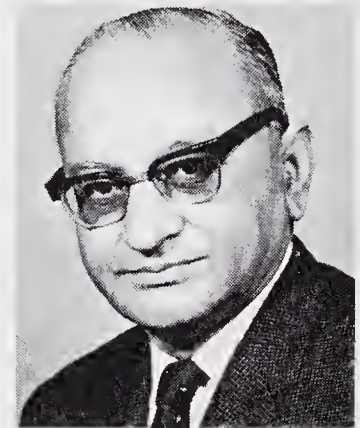


SHRI N.T. MOOLOO

Born—Pretoria, Businessman. Secretary and Public Officer of Companies. Commissioner of Oaths. Prominent Sports Administrator. Founder and President of Transvaal Cricket Union. Treasurer of Indian Football Association of South Africa. Chairman of Pretoria Sanathan Ved Dharma Sabha.

SHRI LALLOOBHAI P. MODI

Director of Companies, Johannesburg.

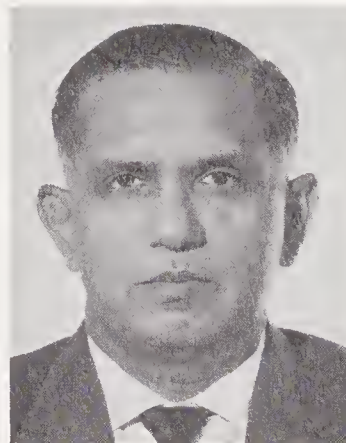


SHRI KANJIBHAI MORAR

Born Sarai, Navsari, India. August 1914. Emigrated to South Africa with parents in 1925. Educated in India. Married to Bhikabhen in India in 1937. Prominent businessman of King Williamstown.

SHRI N.V. METHA

Sponsored by N.V. Metha and K.V. Metha in memory of their late father Mr. V.D. Metha, who came to this country with Mahatma Gandhi, as a settler at the Phoenix Settlement. Was a volunteer worker in the printing of "Indian Opinion" a newspaper founded by Mahatmaji.

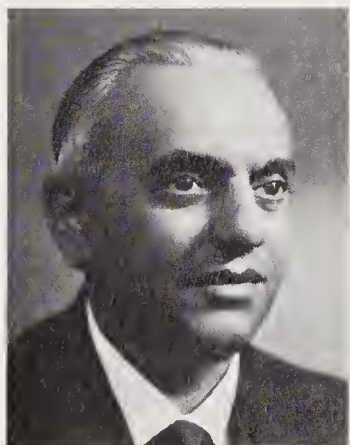


LATE SHRI MAKAN BHANA

Sponsored by Parbhooobhai Makan and Trikambhai Makan of Port Elizabeth in memory of their late father.

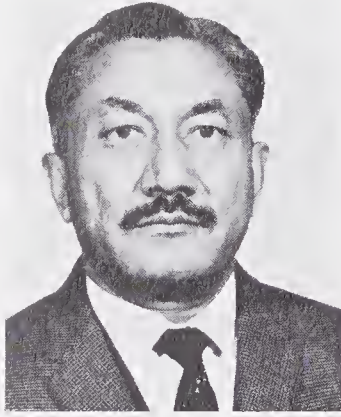
SHRI BHIKUBHAI MORAR

Prominent businessman of Klerksdorp. Directors of Morar Bros. (Pty) Ltd. Associated with local religious, cultural and welfare institutions. Sponsorship to Mahatma Gandhi Statue and Bursary Trust in memory of late father, Morar Ramjee.



DR. K. MAGANLAL

First Indian from Cape to graduate at University of Cape Town. Serves on various medical bodies and other organisations.



SHRI P.J. MISTRY

Born—4th October, 1918 — Eastern Transvaal. Spent childhood in India. Businessman at Petit. President of Benoni Gujarati Hindu Seva Samaj.

LATE SHRI NAROTHUM MORAR

Sponsorship to Mahatma Gandhi Statue and Bursary Trust in his memory, by son Bhikubhai N. Morar of Newcastle.



DR. M.B. NAIDOO

Educationalist and Member of South African Indian Council

SHRI VASANJI NAGAR

Born—1907, India. Emigrated to South Africa 1919. Entered into business with father N.K. Gopal & Company. Trustee of Transvaal Hindu Seva Samaj and Transvaal Darjee Mandal. Treasurer of Transvaal Hindu Crematorium Society. Vice-President of Ramakrishna Vedanta Society. Presently engaged in building Ramakrishna Temple in Lenasia, Transvaal.



SHRI KASSEN NARAN

Born—India 1887. Businessman Ermelo District. Later established Kassen Silk Bazaar at Davel. Follower of Gandhi. Social Worker. Respected in the Community. Died 1954.



LATE SHRI HARIBHAI NATHOO

Born—Kholwad, Surat 1917. Educated – Kholwad. Successful businessmen in East London. President of East London Hindu Society. Died 15th May, 1968. Wife, Shrimati Valiben – keen Social worker. Associated with Mahila Mandal.

LATE SHRI C.K. NAIDOO

Prominent businessman of King Williamstown. Keenly interested in social and religious activities. Died—29th December, 1967.



LATE SHRI VASSANBHAI NARSAI GANDEVYA

Prominent Religious, Educational and Social Worker. Established successful outfitting business in Salt River, Cape. Was Chairman of Cape Town Kshtriya Mitra Mandal, Shri United Hindu Association, Gujrathi Vidya Mandir and South African Kshtriya Maha Sabha. Associated with Divine Life Society, Cape Town Branch. Donated R2000—00 to the educational Trust of the South African Kshtriya Maha Sabha.

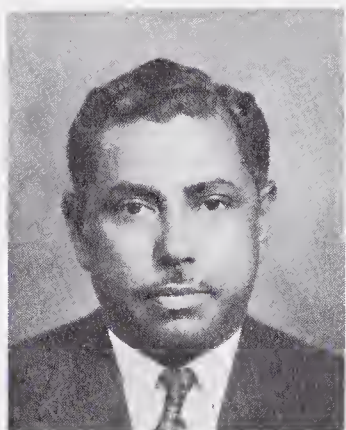
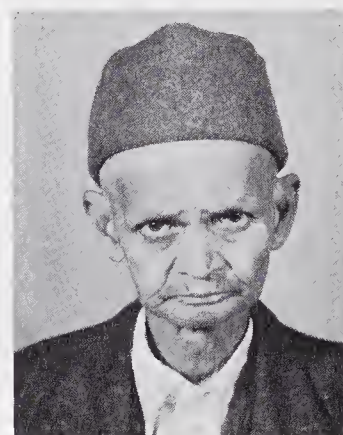


LATE SHRI V.G. NAIDOO

Prominent businessman in Colenso. Actively participated in Sports. Outstanding Soccerite and Cricketer. Represented Natal in Sam China Tournament. President of Colenso Football and Cricket Clubs. Chairman of Natal Indian Organisation, Colenso Branch. Grantee of Colenso Indian School. Contributed generously to charities. Died 30th December 1951.

LATE SHRI DAYAL NARAN

Born—India 1883. Emigrated to South Africa 1904. Studied Gujarati in India. Established business — D. Naran & Co. (Pty) Limited Standerton. His Co-Director is Vallabh Bhoola.



SHRI M.A. NYDOO

Born—1908 in Natal. Established Sunshine Dry Cleaners, Manbro Furniture Manufacturing Co., Homo-O-Pride Furnishers, Buildwell Building Co. and Padhmansun Motion Picture Distributors. Managing Director Padhma Theatres (Pty) Ltd., and Amssa Investments (Pty) Ltd. Foundation member of Pathmajuranni Andhra Institute. President of Andhra Maha Sabha of S.A. Represented the Sabha at Andhra Day Celebration in Mauritius. Died 31st December, 1960.

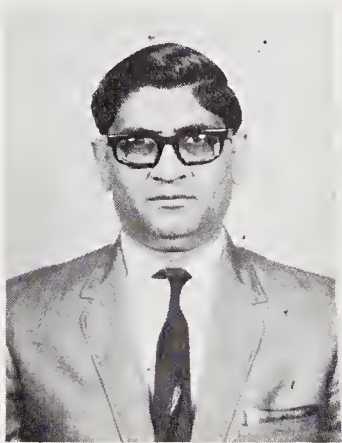
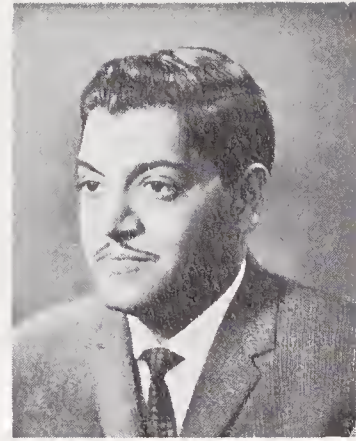
SHRI S.L. NAIDOO

Prominent Farmer. Grantee Winterton State Aided Indian School. President Ramakrishna Centre, Winterton Branch.



SHRI THAKOR NARSAI

Age 37 years. Resident of Potchefstroom. Keenly interested in religious and social welfare. Producer of religious shows. Trader in carpets, upholstery materials and motor trimmings. Other interests are tennis and music.

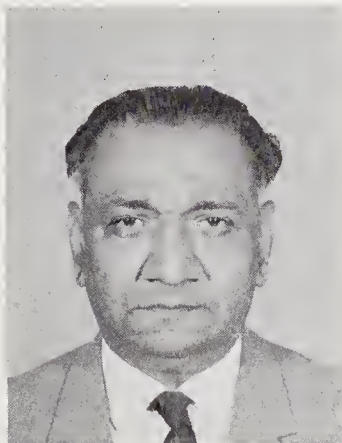


SHRI BHIKUBHAI PARBHOOBHAI PATEL

Born—Ganeshwad—Sisodra, Navsari, Gujarat, India on 7th December, 1927. Emigrated to South Africa in 1941. Entered Commerce since 1943. Has been a staunch believer in the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi.

SHRI LALOO BHAGWAN PATEL

Born—Surat, India, 14th September, 1908. Director of Patco Wholesalers and L.B. Patel & Co. Chairman of the Surat Hindu Educational Society, and Founder and Grantee of the Surat Hindu Government Aided Indian School, Durban. Officer and Member of the South African Hindu Maha Sabha.



SHRI SOMABHAI PREMABHAI PATEL

Born—Shekar Bardoli, India, 4th June, 1912. Educated in India. Emigrated with parents in 1920. Return to India within 2 months, came back to South Africa in 1928. Worked as a tailor. In 1934 went to India and married Ambaben. Started own business in 1936 at Johannesburg. Established partnership in bottling and pickling Industry as Raman Bros. Firm now known as Paramount Products.



SHRI GOVINDBHAI PARBHOO

Born—India, Taluka, Navsari District Surat, 1890. Emigrated to South Africa 1910. Established business – G. Parbhoo & Sons, Durban. Now businessman and Industrialist in Zambia.

LATE SHRI MADHAV BHOOLA PATEL

DURBAN

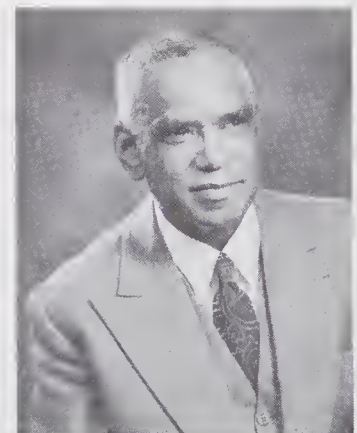


SHRI RAMABHAI HANSJEEBHAI PATEL

Prominent businessman of Johannesburg.

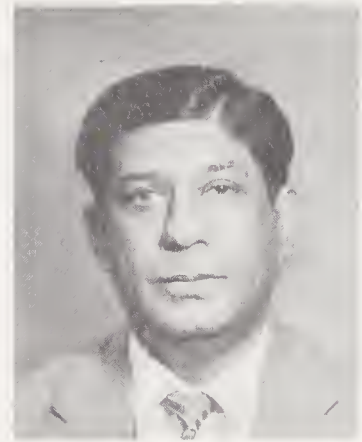
LATE SHRI P.R. PATHER

Born—Mauritius. Emigrated to South Africa 1902. Eminent personality in South Africa. Held important positions in Political, Social, Religious, Educational and Cultural Organisations. Chairman—Executive of the South African Indian Council. President of South African Hindu Maha Sabha. Sent by South African Indian Congress to enlist support against Land Tenure Act to United Nations in advisory capacity to Indian Delegations. Vice-Chairman M.L. Sultan Technical College Council 1957–62.



SHRI COOPOOSAMY JAGATHESAN PATHER

Born—1912 Durban. Educated at Higher Grade Indian School and Marine College Durban. Land and Estate Agent. Commissioner of Oaths. Government Valuator. Member: Hindu Tamil Institute, Premier Physical Culture Club. Life Vice-President Natal Tamil Vedic Society.



SHRI A. SOOBIAH PILLAY

Land and Estate Agent. In 1968 Launched Sublime Investments (Pty) Ltd. Patron of many Sporting bodies. Associated with religious and social organisations. Contributed substantially to erection of Ananda Ashram and Kailas Ashram, Pietermaritzburg.

LATE SHRI DAYABHAI PARAG PATEL

Victoria Street, Durban.



SHRI VYTHALINGAM SEVERAM PATHER

Philanthropist. Prominent personality of Johannesburg. Devoted member of Divine Life Society. Sponsor of Sanathan Dharma Sabha Library, Ladysmith.

LATE SHRI VRAJLALL RAGHAVJEE PAREKH

Of Choonilall Bros., Durban.



LATE SHRI RATILALL VRAJLALL PAREKH

Of Choonilall Bros., Durban.

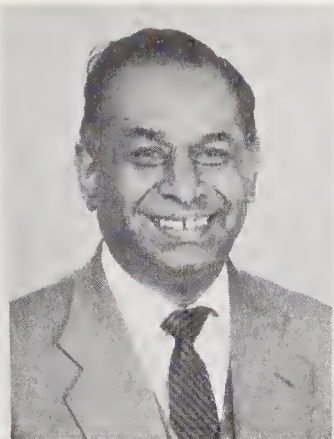
SHRI SOMAROO PACHAI

Born—2nd November, 1925 at Ladysmith. Educated—Ladysmith. Associated with trade Union Movement and Natal Indian Congress. Presently, successful building contractor in Northern Natal. Served on welfare, cultural and religious organisations in Natal and Cape. Chairman of Ladysmith Indian Civic Association, Young Hindu Cultural Service Society and Ladysmith Mahatma Gandhi Centenary Celebration Committee. Trustee of Hindu Yuvak Sabha.



SHRI MANICKAM PILLAY

Born—Avoca 1905. Son of Naga Pillay — Pioneer Natal Indian. In 1926 Commenced own business at Glenco. Joined M.M. Amod & Co., 1929 as chief cashier and Bookkeeper. Ardent Religious and Social worker. Secretary and Auditor of Hindu Thrikootam Sabha. Founder/Secretary Glenco Football Association. Organised Tamil School in Ladysmith. Secretary Natal Founders Organisation, Ladysmith Branch. Established First Cold Storage business in Ladysmith. Now retired.



SHRI NARSAIBHAI BHOOLA PARBHOO

Emigrated to South Africa—1919. Successful businessman. Commenced with tailoring trade. Opened silk house in Eloff Street. Wholesale Woollen Merchants and Direct Importers. Specialising in Partex 99 Serge and Tootal Robia Sarries. Member of Transvaal Darjee Mandal, Jo'burg.

SHRI MAGANLAL MANJEE PREMJE

Born—Pretoria 1921. Schooled at Pretoria and Louis Trichardt. Joined father in Wholesale business travelled extensively in India.

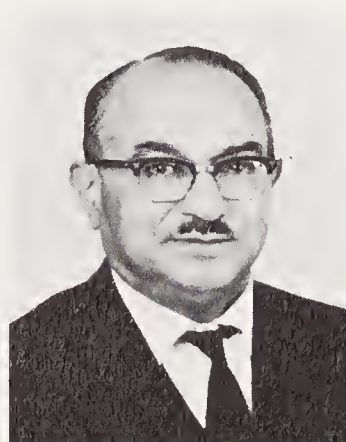


SHRI DAYA LALL PARBHOO

Born—Vesma District, Navsari, India, 1927. Emigrated to South Africa in 1933. Joined Merchant Navy during World War II. Travelled widely in India.

SHRI J.D. PRAJAPATI

Born at Eru, India, 1910. Emigrated to South Africa 1919. Studied at Government Indian School, Johannesburg. Qualified bookkeeper. Successful businessman. Owner of Modi's Bazaar, Nigel. Foundation member Transvaal Hindu Seva Samaj. President Nigel Indian Association. Instrumental in establishing Mackenzievill Township for Indians in Nigel. Past president of Transvaal Prajapati Association.



SHRI V.T. PILLAY

Born of indentured parents 1909 at Kearsney Sea Estates. Educated at Depot Road Government School, Durban. Took active part in religious cultural, educational and social activities. Founder of Cape Tamil Institute. Successful businessman. Proprietor of Dry Cleaning business—Messrs. Omega Enterprises (Pty) Ltd. Trustee of Sivalayam of Cape Town.

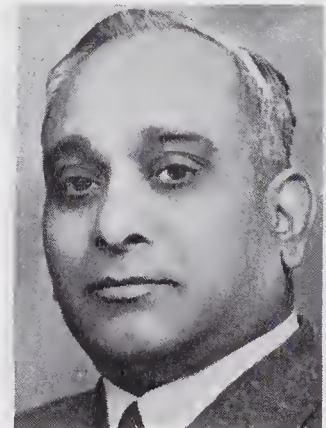


SHRI SUNDRAGEN (SUNDRA) PILLAY (F.I.B.A.)

Born—25th June, 1907 in Durban. Educated in Pretoria and Johannesburg. Bookkeeper, accountant and general agent in Cape Town. Worked in Botswana. Actively engaged in public activities. Vice-President Cape Indian Congress, Cape Coloured and European Joint Council. Member of South African Indian Congress. Executive member of Western Province Indian Football Association. Promoted interests of Tamil Community in Cape Town. Devoted himself to building Lord Siva's Temple.

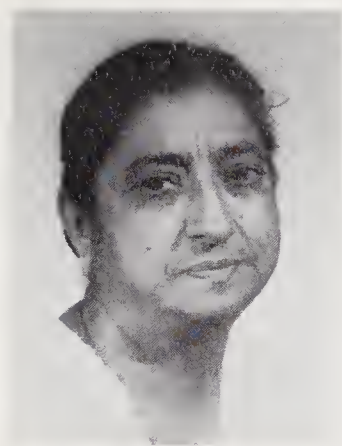
LATE SHRI VANMALIBHAI RAGABHAI PATEL

Born—1896 at Chovisi, Navsari, India. Emigrated to South Africa. Successful businessman of Cape Town. One of the first to establish Mineral Water Manufacturers business in the Republic. Religious, Social and educational Worker. President of United Hindu Association.



LATE SHRI MOHAN PARAG

Born—Bulsar, India. Emigrated to South Africa 1910. Shoe-repair business in Port Elizabeth. Public worker. Active member of Kshatriya Gujarati Mandal. Travelled widely in India. Died in Uitenhage at early age of 38. Sponsored by sons Dhirajlal, Thakorbhai, Ramjeebhai and Late Ishwarbhai in memory of Mohan Parag.

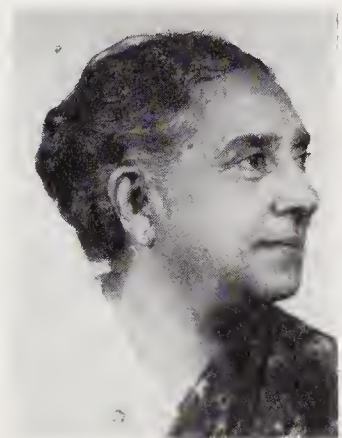


SHRIMATI T.V. SHUNMUGAM PILLAY

Born-1913 at Port Elizabeth. Religious and Social worker. Was Secretary and Chairlady of Hindu Women's Association. Welcomed Kunwar and Lady Maharaj Singh. Actively engaged in work of Divine Life Society. After the death of husband in 1953, manages own Fresh Produce business in Kimberley.

SHRI VALLABHBHAI B. PATEL

Born-1889, Navsari, India. Emigrated to South Africa 1906. One of the founders and President of Transvaal Hindu Seva Samaj. First Indian appointed Commissioner of Oaths in Transvaal 1936. Director of V.B. Patel & Co. (Pty) Ltd.



SHRIMATI T.V. LEELAVATHY PILLAY

Born-1901. Educated at New Main Street High School, Kimberly Tamil teacher. Actively engaged in work of Divine Life Society. Had honour of garlanding Mahatma Gandhi when eleven years old.

SHRI GOVINDBHAI GOSAIBHAI PATEL

Born-1903. Successful businessman in Roodepoort, Transvaal. Associated with Bombay House. Present director of Govindji & Sons (Pty) Ltd. Founder of Shree Roodepoort Hindu Seva Samaj.



SHRI BAIJOONATH PARAG

Born—7th July 1916, Ladysmith, Natal. Educated at Ladysmith Indian School (Windsor High School). Member Sanathan Dharma Sabha. Served as its Secretary 1933 – 1959. Holds official positions in Young Hindu Cultural Service Society and Diwali Celebration Committee. Donor towards Sanathan Dharma Sabha Temple Funds and the Ved Dharma Sabha, Lenasia. Businessman.

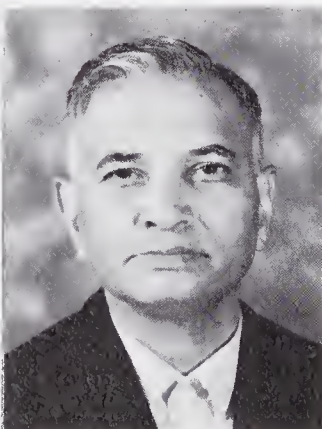
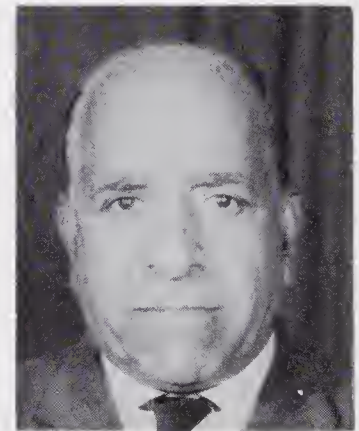


SHRI SOOBIAH PATHER

Born—1916 at Durban. Successful businessman. Proprietor of Pyramid Jewellers and Pawn Brokers, Clairwood, Durban.

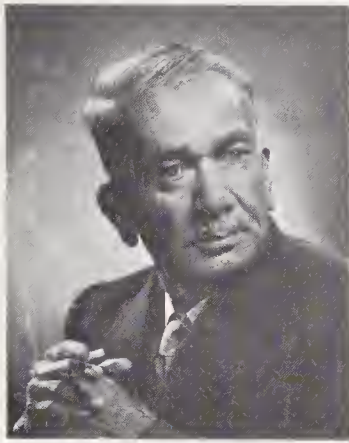
SHRI GOBERDHAN SHEONARAIN PANDAY

Born—1916. Son of renowned Hindu Priest. Educated at York Road Government Indian School and at Indian Teachers' Training Class. Qualified Teacher. Vice-President of Mount Patridge State Indian School, Pietermaritzburg. Religious and Social Worker. Deputy Director of Studies of Sri Ram Krishna – Vivekananda Hindu Study Circle. President of Vedic Vidya Pracharnee Sabha, Pentrich, Pietermaritzburg. Hindu Priest.



SHRI DAHYA BHIKHA PATEL

Born in India. Educated in India and Durban. In 1934 joined Govan Mani & Co. Married to Diwaribhen, sister of Govan Mani in 1934. Dedicated, religious and social worker. Trustee:—Shree S.A. Chovisi Kachhia-wadi Trust, Surat Hindu Association and Shri Ramakrishna Children's Holiday Home. Committee Member:— S.A. Hindu Maha Sabha, Surat Hindu Educational Society, Gujarati Eisteddfod Committee, Gujarati Cultural Society and Ramakrishna Vedanta Society. Trustee and Secretary of Shri Lewa Patel Vidyarthi Ashram.



SHRI TRIKAM RIGA

Born—1898, Bombay Province, India. Emigrated to South Africa 1902 with parents. Successful businessman. Started business in Ladysmith—as M.V. Riga & Co. In 1950 established Riga Bros. (Pty) Ltd., Wholesalers. Trustee of Sanathan Dharma Sabha, Ladysmith. Associated with Sporting, Political, Cultural and Social Activities.

SHRI SATHNARAIN RAMKHELAWAN

Born—1919 at Ladysmith. Educated at Glencoe Indian School. Farmed in Wasbank. Successful businessman. Proprietor of “Union Watch Makers”. Committee member of Sanathan Dharma Sabha, Ladysmith. Member of Mahatma Gandhi Statue and Bursary Trust. One of the Founders and first Treasurer of Leonards Township Rent and Rate-payers Association. His father—Late Ramkhelawan well known devotee and Vishnu Pujari.

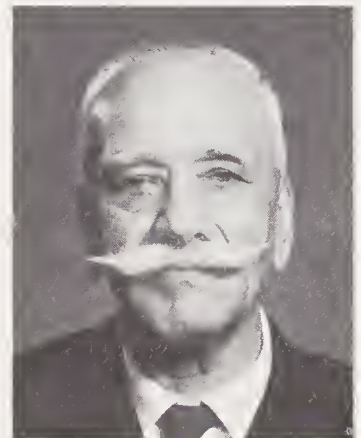


SHRI RUSTOM JALBHOY RUSTOMJEE

Born in Bombay, India. Arrived in S.A. in 1929. Present Trustee of the Solly Ginwala Memorial Trust, the Rustomjee Jivanji Gorcoodoo Trust, the Bai Jerbai Rustomjee Trust, the R.K. Khan Hospital & Dispensary Trust, the Indian Centenary Scholarship Trust, Executive member of the Durban Indian Child Welfare Society. Treasurer of the M.K. Gandhi Library & Parsee Rustomjee Hall Committee. District Manager – The Prudential Assurance Co., Ltd.

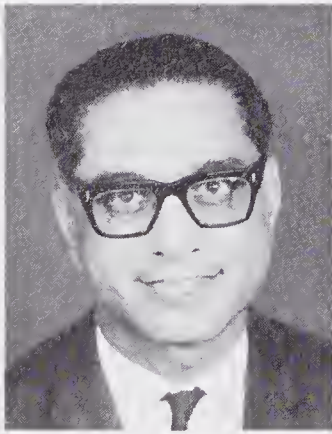
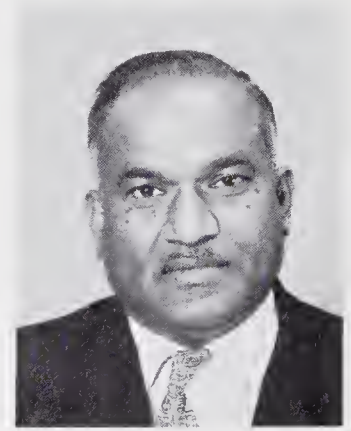
SHRI S. ROOPSINGH

Born—1899, Verulam, Natal. Educated at Verulam Indian School. Philanthropist, businessman and sugar cane farmer. Follower of teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. Visited Rajghat, India with President and Prime Minister of India. Trustee of Roopsingh family. Religious and Educational Trust. Roopsingh Bros, have built Radha Roopsingh State Aided Indian School, and a large school at Shakaskraal. Commissioner of Oaths. Dedicated a Shrine at Vishnu Temple, Ladysmith.



SHRI R.V. RAMIAH

Born-1911, Greytown, Natal. Businessman at Estcourt. Director of Companies. President Hindu Youth Centre, Estcourt; and Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa. Served on Local Affairs Committee. Sports Administrator. Keenly interested in religious, educational, cultural and social activities.

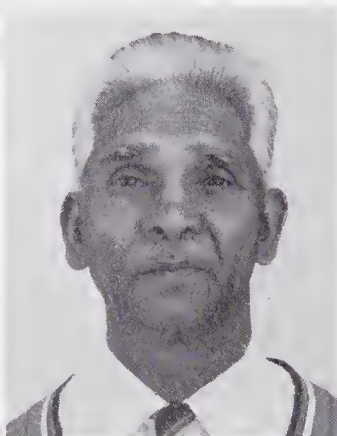
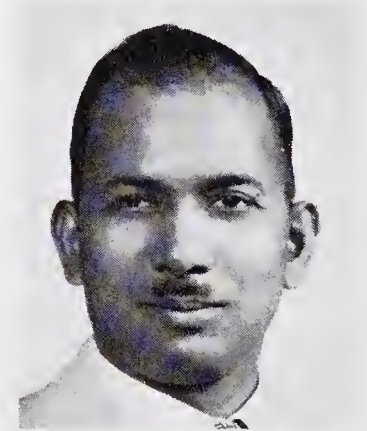


SHRI PHIROZ SHAPURJEE RANDERIA

Born-1919, Durban. Father associated with Mahatma Gandhi's Passive Resistance Movement. Studied Vernacular in Surat. Also educated at St. Anthony's School, Carlisle Street Indian School and Sastri College. Pioneer distributor of Indian Films in South Africa since 1944. Visited India several times. Keenly interested in activities of the community.

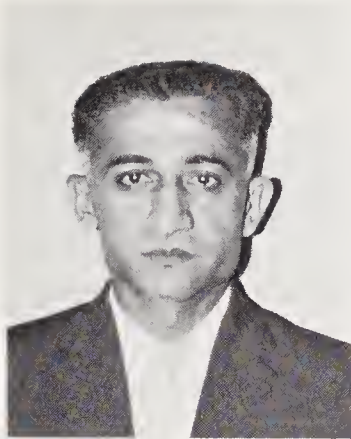
LATE SHRI SALLIGRAM RAMGULAM

Born-1912. Renown furniture manufacturer. Pioneer Industrialist in Jacob's Industrial Complex. Donated generously to religious and social organisations. Created Trust to build Temple. Sponsored by Jacobs Furniture and Bedding Factory (Pty) Ltd. in memory of late Mr. Salligram Ramgulam.



SHRI G. REDDY

Born-1904. Pietermaritzburg. Educated at Keate Street School and Ladysmith Indian Government School. His father – pioneer settler of Ladysmith. Businessman in Bergville – Baker and Confectioner. Hon. Life Vice-President of Hindu Thirikootam.

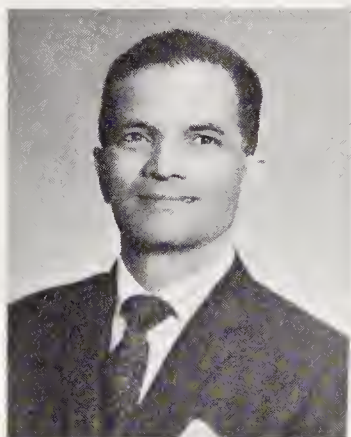


SHRI KALYAN RAMJEE

Born-1921, India. Emigrated to South Africa 1929. Educated at Pretoria. Member Zoutpansberg Hindu Seva Samaj, Kshatriya Mandal, Pretoria. Businessman. Proprietor of Ramjee's Store and Director of Imperial Wholesalers, Louis Trichardt.

SHRI HARGOVIND RATANJEE RAMJEE

Born-1925, Bloemhof, Transvaal. Educated in South Africa and India. Proprietor of Cycle Store and Hobbies Centre. Keen Sportsman Treasurer of Klerksdorp Hindu Samaj. Hobbies: Art and Photography.



LATE SHRI RANCHODBHAI PARSHOTAM

Born-1908, Navsari, India. Emigrated to South Africa 1916. Bookkeeper. Worked in Reef towns. Made several visits to India. Successful businessman. Ardent social worker. Held various positions in Transvaal United Kshatriya Mandal. Died in India, 1966.

LATE SHRI HARIBHAI RAMJEE

Born-1888, Dabhel, India. Emigrated to South Africa 1903. Pioneer shoe trader in Krugersdorp. Also established Union Fruit Market and Grocers. Took part in Satyagraha movement in South Africa under Gandhiji, imprisoned several times. In India – member of Gramya Panchayat of Dabhel. Vice-Chairman–Hindu Dharma Sabha. Member of Transvaal Hindu Seva Samaj, Krugersdorp. Died in 1963.





LATE SHRI HARIBHAI HIRJEE SONI

Born in India. Emigrated to South Africa in 1894. Settled in Ladysmith, Natal. Business—Jeweller. First Treasurer and Trustee of Sanathan Dharma Sabha. Laid foundation stone of Vishnu Temple, Ladysmith on 25th October, 1959.

SHRI RAMPERSAD RAMGULAM

Born-1905, Durban. Educated in Verulam and Durban. Shop assistant. Successful businessman and industrialist. Leading furniture manufacturer, Director of Transport business. Member of Industrial Council of Furniture Manufacturing Industry of Natal. Trustee of Sanathan Dharma Sabha, Natal. Member of Durban Hindu Temple. Toured Europe and Asia.



SHRI SONI MOOLJEE HIRJEE

Born—1905, Kathiawad, India. Educated at Gedbagasra, India. Emigrated to South Africa 1918. Merchant, jeweller, pawn broker in Durban. Secretary of Sri Girnara Soni Hitvardhak Mandal – a welfare organisation. Toured East Africa and India. Laid foundation stone of Kalabhayan in Rajkot. Compiled census of his people. Member of South African Hindu Maha Sabha. Foundation and life member of Kathiawad Hindu Seva Samaj.

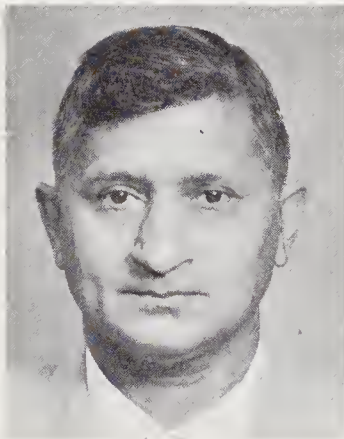
SHRI NAGINBHAI DAYABHAI SONI

Born-1912, Vadoli, Surat, India. Emigrated to South Africa 1926. Difficult beginning—Sold snuff between Benoni and Johannesburg. Cook and Factory hand. Studied art of engraving in India. Established own business in Durban, 1937.



LATE SHRI GOPALJEE DAMJEE SONI

Born in Natal. Leading Watch maker and jeweller in Pietermaritzburg. Contributes towards cultural, religious, educational and social developments of the Community. One of the Founders of Gujarati Vedic Society and School. Served as President. Gave devoted service to Veda Dharma Sabha, Pietermaritzburg. Played important role in building of Crematorium in Pietermaritzburg. President of Deepavali Committee. Took active interest in tennis and its administration. Vice-President of Natal Indian Lawn Tennis Association.

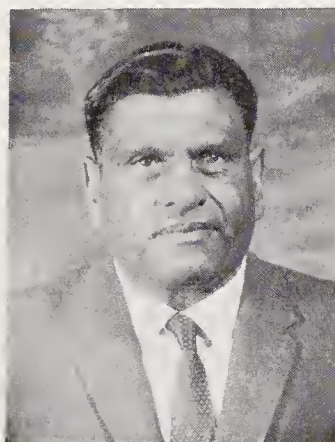


SHRI RAMPAL SINGH

Born-1906. Member of Shree Gopallal Temple, Verulam. President and Trustee Sanathan Dharma Sabha, Natal. Trustee-Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of South Africa. Foundation member - Century Trust. Associated with many other organisations.

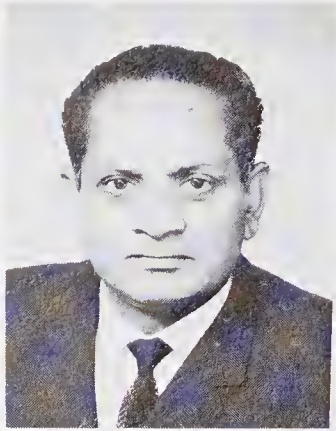
SHRI NURSINGH KHARARI SINGH

Born-1908. Educated in Newcastle and Ladysmith. Store assistant. Commenced motor repair business, 1935. First postal agent in Newcastle 1937. Travelled extensively in Republic. Organised tour of Pundit Rishiram in Northern Natal, 1944. Commissioner of Oaths. Trustee of Hindu Pracharni Sabha. Helped to establish Government Aided Indian School at Newcastle. 1948/49 Vice-President - Northern District Indian Football Association.



SHRI J.J. SINGH

*Director of Companies in Glencoe:
Glencoe Hotspurs Football Club - Hon. Life President
Glencoe Religious & Educational Society:-Patron
Glencoe Child Welfare Society:-Vice-President.
Glencoe Hindu Parachani Sabha:-Treasurer & Trustee.
Glencoe Local Affairs:-Committee Member.
Glencoe Indian School Society:-Ex-Chairman.
Newcastle Hindu Cemetary:-Trustee;
Sanathan Dharma Sabha (Durban):-Committee member.*

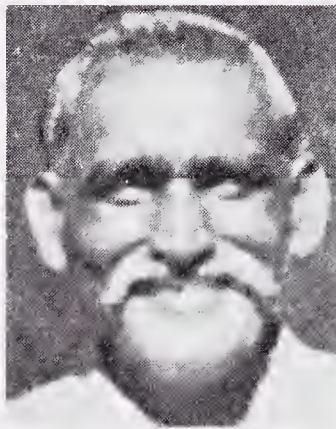


SHRI PREMJEE KARA SOLENKI

Prominent member of the Pretoria Indian Community. Active social and religious worker.

SHRI R.P. SINGH

Associated with Epsom Motors (Pty) Ltd. 132-138 Umgeni Road, Durban, and Mission of the Eternal Religion of South Africa.



LATE SHRI DEVSHI ODHAVJEE SONI

Born-Sauraphtra, India, 1897. Emigrated to South Africa 1902. Jeweller in Dundee. Host of Mahatma Gandhi 1913.

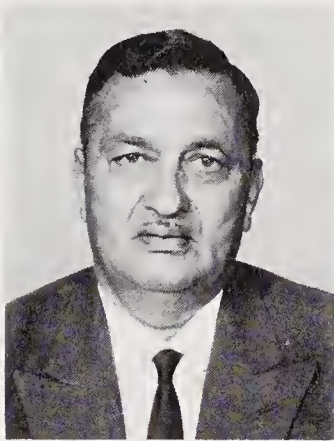
DR. LAKSHMICHANDRA SHAH

Born-1913. Education:—Johannesburg Government Indian School. Benares Hindu School, Sastri College, Witwatersrand University. Social Activities:—President:Johannesburg Sikayah Sabha 1940-1950. President: Sanathan Ved Dharma Sabha (JBH) 1950-1968. Vice-President: Transvaal Indian Congress 1955-1960. Vice-President: Central Indian High School. 1958-1960. Vice-President: Transvaal Gandhi Centenary Council 1969. Treasurer Gurudev Dihyan Mandir S.A. 1969.



SHRI M.D. SINGH

Well-known farmer in the district of Pietermaritzburg. Son of well-known pioneer, Late Dewkie Singh of Pietermaritzburg. Connected with various religious and social bodies. Trustee: Vedic Vidya Pracharak Sabha, Arya Prathinidi Sabha, Hindu Prayer Circle. Donated a classroom to the M.L. Sultan College, Pietermaritzburg.

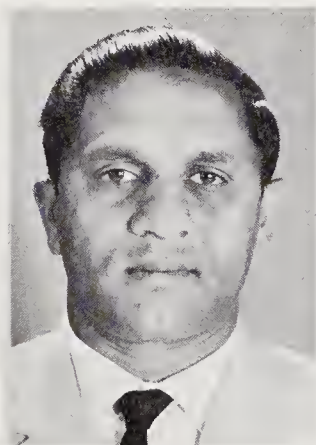
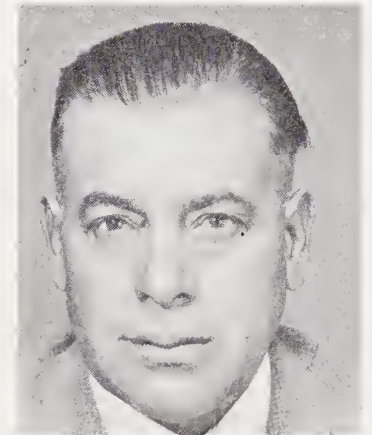


SHRI J.D. SINGH

Born-1906. Lower Tugela District. Farm manager, Zululand. Shop-assistant General dealers near Weenen 1935-1939. Present: General dealer in Modderspruit, Ladysmith District.

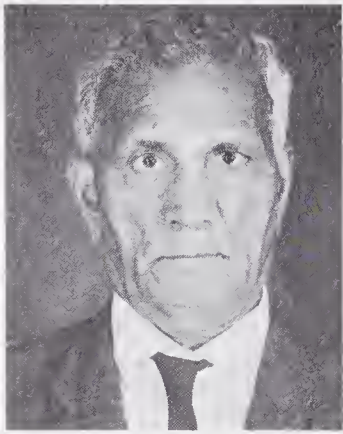
SHRI L. SOOKUN

Farmer at Lidgetton. Son of Late Mr. Sookun, indentured labourer who landed in Natal 1885. Interested in welfare of community.



SHRI PARSHOTAM O. SINGH

Born-1931. Educated at Glencoe and Dundee. Humble beginning delivery boy-1947-handyman in garage-Newcastle. Joined building trade. Leading building contractor in Newcastle. Keen Sportsman. Toured the Republic and Mauritius. Donates generously.



SHRI THAKER HARILAL AMBARAM

Son of Pundit Ambaram Maharaj. Born Latipur, Jamnagar State, 1895. Educated Shree Daxina Moorti Vidyarthi Bhuvan Bhavnagar. Passed matriculation of the Bombay university 1913. Emigrated to South Africa in 1914. Entered commercial career. Started own business as general dealer and direct importer in 1923. Joint treasurers of the Natal Indian Congress and South African Hindu Maha Sabha. Secretary of the Kathiawad Arya Mandal. Represented Natal at the S.A.I.C. emergency conference Johannesburg, 1933.

LATE SHRI KHANDOOBHAI TIEKAM

Born-1912, Vadoli, Surat, India. Emigrated to South Africa with parents. Fruit and Grocery business in Queenstown. Respected member of Prajapati Community. Died 24th May, 1949.



PUNDIT B. TULSIRAM

Born-1903, Durban. Member of Arya Yuvak Sabha. Taught Sanskrit. Founder-member of Manor Gardens Hindu Association. Hindi Playwright and producer. Priest. President: Sanathan Dharma Sabha in 1965. Delegate at World Hindu Dharma Sammelan, New Delhi in 1966. Attended Vishva Hindu Parishad, Allahabad. Opened all India Women's Service Corps, 1956, at Gwalior, India. Founder of 'Gyathree Pariwaar' and its bi-monthly magazine. Awarded Gold Medal at Indian Cultural and Awards Festival in 1968.

SHRI NARANDAS VALABDASS

Born-1920, Durban. Started business at age of 15. Managing Director of Narandas Jewellers, Durban. Director of Universal Lace Mills, Gufrana Investments. Pinetown. Interested in social activities. Members of Kathiawad Seva Samaj. Patni Soni Association Natal, Indian Manufacturing Jewellers Association.



LATE SHRI V. VALAYDEN

Born-1897, Mauritius. Emigrated to South Africa 1908. Settled and started business in Port Elizabeth. First Indian Manufacturer of bricks in Veerplaats, 1927. Bus owner. Interested in Welfare of the Community. Shri Krishna Temple in Port Elizabeth was built in his memory. Trustee of Shri Siva Subramanier Aulayam. Died 1959.

Sponsored by Allomel Valayden.

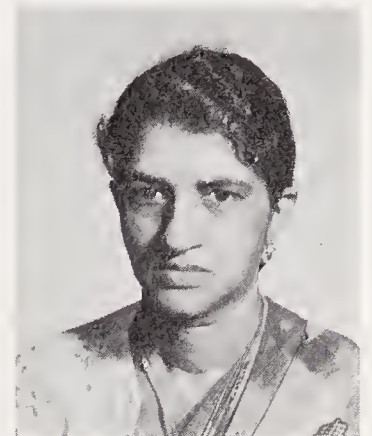


SHRI POONOOSAMY PETHINASAMY VANDAYAR

Born-1910, Port Elizabeth. President-Port Elizabeth Indian Civic Association. Trustee: Shri Siva Submanier Aulayam, Port Elizabeth and Siva Aulayam, Rylands Cape Town. Committee member-Rudolf Street Hindu Primary School. Keenly interested in the spiritual, educational and general welfare of the Community.

LATE SHRI V. VALAYDEN

Born-1897, Mauritius. Emigrated to South Africa 1908. Settled and started business in Port Elizabeth. First Indian Manufacturer of bricks in Veerplaats, 1927. Bus owner. Interested in Welfare of the Community. Shri Krishna Temple in Port Elizabeth was built in his memory. Trustee of Shri Siva Subramanier Aulayam. Died 1959.
Sponsored by Mrs Veeramah Valayden.



LATE SHRI VALJEE VALJEE

Born in Porbandar, India. Pioneer settler in South Africa - 1889. Associated with Mahatma Gandhi. Donated generously to educational and charitable institutions. Responsible for erection of Manilal Valjee State Aided Indian School in Durban. Created charitable trust of R20,000-00, in India. Died 1966 at the age of 100 years.

MESSRS DALUBHAI H. MISTRY & SONS
Chemical Manufacturers, Johannesburg.

SHRI JAGJIVAN MOTI
Merchant Tailor, Heidelberg.

SHRI BHANABHAI MORAR
General Merchant, De Aar, Cape

SHRIMATI DAHIBEN VANMALI MISTRY
*Sponsored in memory of her Late Husband,
Vanmali P. Mistry of Balfour,
Transvaal.*

SHRI R.M. NAIDOO
Administrator of Companies, Durban.

N. NARAN CHARITABLE TRUST
Durban.

SHRI AMIRITLAL KHANDUBHAI NAIK
General Merchant, Roodepoort, Transvaal

SHRI CHINNIAH SWARAJAIA NAIDOO
General Merchant, Roseneath, Umkomaas.

SHRI M.G. NAIDOO
Director of Companies, Pietermaritzburg.

SHRI K.N. NAIDOO
Building Contractor, Pietermaritzburg.

SHRI R.R. PATEL
Businessman, Grey Street, Durban.

SHRI CHOTOOBHAI GOVANBHAI PATEL
*Director of Golden Era Printers & Stationers
(Pty) Ltd., Johannesburg.*

SHRI D.N. PATEL
President Street, Johannesburg, Transvaal.

SHRI CHIBA JERAM PATEL
*Sponsorship to Mahatma Gandhi Statue and
Bursary Trust in memory of mother Devi
Jeram. Director of Companies, Cape Town.*

SHRI THAKOR MAKAN
Director of Kismet Dry Cleaners, Durban.

SHRI PIROJSHAW N. PHIROZ
Director of Companies, Durban.

MESSRS PARSOTAM VALLABH & CO.
Merchant Tailors, Durban.

LATE SHRI S.S. PATHER
Durban.

SHRI PEMABHAI JIVAN PATEL
Director of Company, Cape Town.

SHRI JERAM PREMJI
Victoria Street, Durban.

SHRI LATE DAYA PARSHOTAM
Main Road, Umzinto.

LATE SHRI MAGALINGA PADAYACHEE
*Sponsored by his sons Sivagangai Kugaranjan
and Ananda Nadarajan.
Durban.*

MESSRS ROOP & MAKAN
*Wholesale Merchants, Bethal,
Transvaal.*

SHRI ATHMARAM MOTIRAM RANA
Director of Company, Durban.

LATE SHRI M. RAMAWTAR
Sydenham, Durban.

LATE SHRI T.K. SONI
Durban, Natal.

SHRI S.V. SOLLIER
*Prominent businessman of Queenstown,
Cape Province. Devoted member of the
Divine Life Society.*

SHRI NAGINBHAI P. UMLEY
*Businessman & Sports Administrator of
Port Elizabeth.*

SHRI MAGANLAL J. VISRAM
Manufacturing Jeweller, Durban.

VICTORY LOUNGE, Durban.

SHRI MATHURA PARSAD BADAL

Businessman of 153a – 12th Street, Lenasia, Transvaal.

DR. S. BEHAREE

Medical Practitioner of 222 East Street, Pietermaritzburg.

LATE SHRI THAKORBHAI N. BHOOLA

Director of Companies of 67 Victoria Street, Durban.

SHRI KANJEE BHOOLA

Wholesale Merchant of 122 Victoria Street, Durban.

SHRI NARANBHAI BHANABHAI

Timber Merchant of Bethal, Transvaal.

SHRI NAGAR BHAGA AND SONS

Merchants of 45 Church Street, Bethal.

SHRI RAMJEE PARAGJEE BHAGAT

Sponsorship to Mahatma Gandhi Statue and Bursary Trust in memory of Late Gangaben Ramjee Bhagat of Johannesburg.

SHRI CHETTY BROTHERS

Merchants and film distributors of 441 Boom Street, Pretoria.

SHRI MAGANBHAI CHIBA

Retired Businessman of Ladysmith.

DHUPELIA'S CHARITABLE TRUST – DURBAN

SHRI V. VASANJEE DEVSHI

Merchant of 162 Victoria Street, Durban.

SHRI S.H. DHUPELIA

Wholesale Merchant of Bond Street, Durban.

LATE SHRI FAKIR DULLABH

General Merchant of Albany Road, Grahamstown, Cape.

SHRI DULLABH AND SONS

Merchants of 48 Kerk Street, Bethal.

DAYALJEE BROS.

Sponsorship to the Mahatma Gandhi Statue & Bursary Trust in memory of Late Kessa Dayal.

THE VOICE OF TRUTH

MESSRS K.B. FAKIR & CO.

Wholesale produce merchants of 61 High Street, Worcester, Cape.

SHRI RAMNIKLAL AMULAKH GOSHALIA

Director of Companies, Durban.

SHRIMATI H.K. GOKAL

Market Street, Johannesburg.

SHRI V. GOVENDER

Director of Companies, Lenasia, Transvaal.

LATE SHRI GIRDHARLAL JIVAN

Sponsored by J. Gordhan & Co. (Pty) Ltd., Pretoria.

MESSRS KHETSI HARIBHAI AND SONS

Wholesale Merchants of Durban.

SHRI POPATLAL KARA AND FAMILY

Wholesale Merchants of Grey Street, Durban.

LATE SHRI RANCHOD K. KAPITAN

Sponsored by Shri H.R. Kapitan in memory of his Father.

SHRI MOHANLAL K. LODHIA & SONS

Merchant Jewellers of Grey Street, Durban.

MESSRS LALLOO BROS.

Merchants of Fordsburg, Johannesburg.

LATE SHRIMATI RUKIHBEN LAKHOOBHAI

Springs, Transvaal.

SHRI CHUGGANBHAI LALOO

Merchant Tailor of Dundee, Natal.

LATE VANRAVAN R.M. LAKHANI

Of 10 Madressa Arcade, Durban.

Shri HARILAL & LILADHAR HEMRAJ LAKHANI

Merchants & Distributors, Durban.

SHRI RAMCHAND HASSARAM MAHBUBANI.

Director of Companies, Durban.

MESSRS K.S. MISTRY & SONS (PTY) LTD.

Wholesale Merchants, Durban.

THAKER MANJEE FAMILY TRUST

Durban.

Sanathan Dharma Sabha

Officials

TRUSTEES:

*A. Haribhai, H. R. Singh, R. Bennie, T. Riga and
R. Mootheram*

PRESIDENT:

R. T. Riga

VICE-PRESIDENT:

J. R. Singh

JOINT SECRETARIES:

B. Hari and S. Ramparsad

JOINT TREASURERS:

S. Thulsie and I. J. Maharaj

HON. AUDITOR:

M. N. Pillay

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

*B. Sooknundhan, S. Ramkelawan, C. N. Naran, R.
Hari, B. Parag, R. S. Roy, H. L. Maharaj, S. Jodhia,
N. Haribhai, S. L. Maharaj and Mohan T. Riga*

SUB COMMITTEES:

MAHATMA GANDHI TRUST:

*R. M. Lodhia (Chairman), B. Hari (Secretary/
Treasurer), R. T. Riga, J. R. Singh, A. Haribhai,
R. Kallideen and S. Ramkelawan*

EDUCATIONAL & RELIGIOUS:

*J. R. Singh (Convenor), S. Gunpath, R. Hari, B.
Sooknundhan and K. Assaram*

LIBRARY:

*Mohan T. Riga (Convenor), C. N. Naran, N. Haribhai
and Sunker A. Sarjoo*

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE:

*S. Ramkelawan (Convenor), R. Hari, S. Gunpath,
K. Assaram, Ram Moonia and K. Barathsingh*

FUND-RAISING COMMITTEE:

*D. Bhagwanth (Convenor), B. Sooknundhan and
R. Hari*

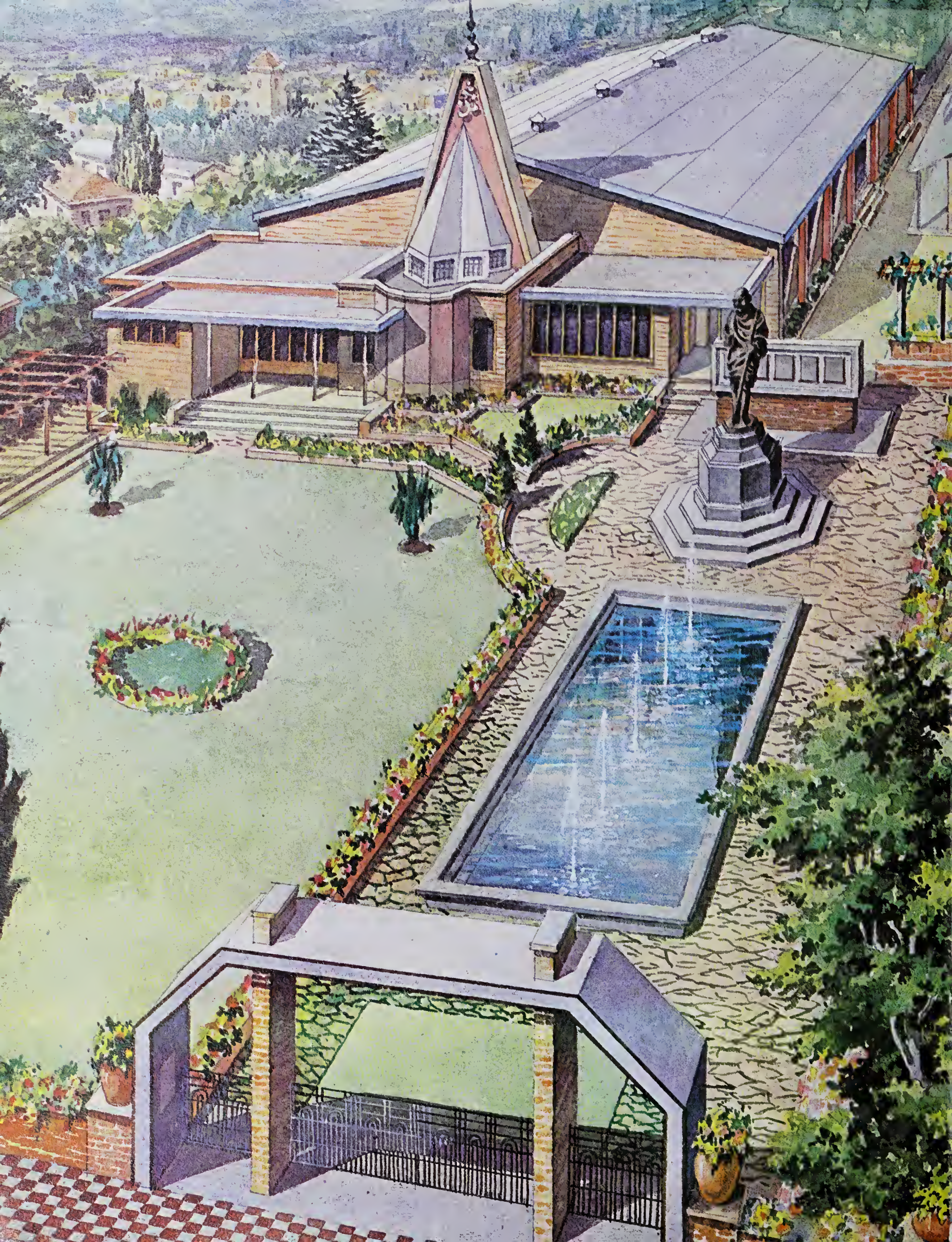
STAMP COMMITTEE:

*R. Hari (Convenor), B. Sooknundhan and
D. Bhagwanth*



"I got my leave.

Bid me farewell my brothers!" — Jagore





I do not want my house to be walled in all sides and my windows to be stuffed . . .
..I want the Culture of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible
..But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any of them
..Mine is not a religion of the prison house . It has room for the least of God's Creations, but it is proof against insolent pride of race religion or colour . . .

—Mahatma Gandhi